

NEW VALUES FOR A NEW INDIA

by

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By the same author

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Verily We proposed to the Heavens,
and to the Earth, and to the mountains
to receive the "trust," but they refused
the burden and they feared to receive
it. Man undertook to bear it, but hath
proved unjust and senseless.

(The Holy Quran, 33:72)

The problem of India is to restore the dignity of human personality and direct energy in the channels that will realise the Values Of This Life.

We created you; then fashioned you, then said We to the angels, "prostrate yourself unto Adam."

(The Holy Quran, 7 : 11)

PREFACE

This book is an expression of irritation against the stinking structure of society in which we have to live. It is a structure rotten to the core which makes an honest living difficult. They, whose conscience is not dead and to whom nature has given intense feelings, must protest against the mad dance of gain and grab they see all about them.

I am one of these unhappy souls. Politics is not in my line. So far I have not entangled myself in the meshes of a political "ism." If I know anything about Indian politics it is that our view of the British is entirely mistaken. When we make a demand we regard them as angels; when the response is inadequate we call them scoundrels. They are neither the one nor the other. They are just human beings. One cannot help admiring their silent strength, their quiet patriotism and their mental poise in times of difficulty, qualities which have made them a great nation.

We want to be a great nation. In this book I have made an attempt to discover the factors that stand in the way of our becoming great and the factors that will make us great. Being

a student of human nature I know we can change ourselves and step into the category of great nations.

The last twenty years in this country have been years of tremendous awakening, but they have also been years of confusion of thought and wastage of human feelings. The leadership has been sincere but wrong. Consequently Indian society has failed to grasp the realities of life and has remained as helpless as ever.

Hatred of the British is the name of patriotism, spending a few years in jail the meaning of sacrifice. Nobody is prepared to sacrifice his traditional point of view. There have been abortive attempts at compromises. Nations were never made through such compromises. India needs new leaders, free from worn-out ideologies, matter-of-fact and all aflame with constructive patriotism. So far a movement towards pure nationalism has not begun in this country. The new leaders will give it a start. Natural forces will bring out such persons. This little book may help in the process.

The book completes the triad I conceived six years ago. I believe India needs a revolution in the fundamentals of her thought. For this purpose there is a need of a new, clear-cut

ideology which should be zealously worked out in the lives of the coming generation by parents and teachers. The new ideology is the theme of this book. For its realisation in actual practice I have made an attempt to prepare the parents in *New Homes For A New India*¹ and the teachers in *The Teacher's Mental Equipment*.² These last two books, although they came first, may be regarded as companion volumes to this one.

This book is written for the younger generation. If those who have crossed the fateful line of 40 read it and feel perturbed it will not be my fault. The criticism from the side of the older generation will be twofold. Firstly, they will unfold ancient scrolls and quote long passages which seem to give a lie to the defects in Indian society that I have ruthlessly pointed out. I may tell them that this book is a study of human behaviour and draws its argument from stubborn facts, observed with laborious care. If critics wish to destroy the argument they should produce facts to the contrary. Secondly, they will say that the author has demolished spirituality in favour of western materialism

¹ Publishers : Atma Ram & Sons, Lahore.

² Publishers : R. S. Munshi Gulab Singh & Sons, Lahore.

and then will sniff the book away. I have done nothing of the kind. I know I have saved spirituality and freed my people from the shackles of superstition and self-deception. I look forward to a strong and great New India.

December, 1940.

R. R. KUMRIA.

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SUFFERING MEN

SOURCES OF SUFFERING

HINDU IDEAL OF LIFE

In this country saints are many, scoundrels as plentiful as blackberries and men few and far between. Because of the paucity of men India suffers.

The saints have made mince-meat of human personality. For the last two thousand years their hold on the people of India has been exceedingly tight. Even at the present moment the monkish face is one of the greatest attractions and the saffron colour plays most upon the imagination of the masses. The saints preach an other-worldly philosophy of life which is one of the chief sources of India's ills. We suffer because we accept suffering as inevitable. While modern sciences teach us to remove the causes of human suffering, our saints tell us to rise above suffering by ignoring it and linking the mind to things beyond. The great Buddha discovered the "Eightfold Path" to defy disease and death. He prescribed a mode of living which ultimately led to the extinction of all

mundane desires. The goal of life was a frame of mind, a state of consciousness which conquers the world by completely forgetting it. The other Hindu systems have the same aim with different means to realise it. The result has been the growth of a national pattern of mind which is given to indifference in regard to this world. This may not be manifest to the superficial observer who sees millions in this country incessantly toiling for earthly success. It is true that the millions have not retired to forests. It is because whether one is a saint or a scoundrel one cannot ignore hunger. Food, clothing and shelter must be secured. Hunger and sex are the fundamental urges which have to be satisfied if the world is to go on. So that the first effort of man is directed towards procuring the means to satisfy hunger and sex and other allied propensities like craving for children. How much energy is saved from these channels and in what directions spent is determined by the ideals of a particular society. If the ideal is to rise above the world no genuine effort will be made to improve it. This ideal being in the blood of the Hindu, there is in him no spontaneous desire to make the world happy and comfortable. That is also the reason why he has never developed social sense and respect for

human personality as such. These characteristics are the result of training which is bound up with a philosophy of life that teaches love of worldly values. The Hindu, at least for two thousand years, has not known such a philosophy of life. Personal salvation is the end he aims at.* That is why he is self-centred, calculating and unsocial. But there was always a well-knit Hindu Society, you may say. True, there was a society which demanded sacrifices of its members for the sake of the whole. A little analysis of such a society will show that the sacrifices which gave the semblance of social sense were codified duties and obligations. If one gave something in charity it was not under the influence of a spontaneous impulse but because the "Book of Dharma" enjoined on one to do so. This arrangement did produce an organised society in spite of the other-worldly philosophy of life. Its defect was that it was not a growth from within the mind. It was an imposition from without. The Hindu jurist constructed an admirable social organisation and thrust it on a mind which was not interested in the world and for the matter of that in any social organisation. But now that

* For a fuller discussion see *New Homes For A New India*, Chapters 1 to 3.

the authority which imposed the law has lost its importance the social structure is disappearing and the Hindu has appeared in his real, self-centred form, interested only in himself; in others so far as they serve his purpose. For though Manu is quitting the stage the ancient mind-set stays. The Hindu Dharma lays stress mainly on personal virtues like Truth and Honesty and many Hindus will still give a good account of such virtues. The ideal being personal salvation, personal discipline and virtues assumed all the importance and social virtues were altogether neglected. They came in as duties. The core of social sense is respect for human personality as such which in religious language is known as 'love thy neighbour as thyself.' It consists in cutting through the wrappings of caste, colour, creed and nationality and discovering man and taking interest in his welfare. In the West certain countries have achieved quite a degree of social sense individually but internationally a collective social sense is still a vague hope and a dim dream. In our own country social sense is completely missing. Big events apart, little happenings will easily illustrate our point. You go to a lecture and take a seat in one of the front rows. After fifteen minutes when the speaker has warmed up to his subject you feel

you are not finding it interesting. You get up and with thumping steps march out of the hall, distracting the audience and disturbing the lecturer. This is an example of lack of social sense on your part. In front of a booking-office at a railway station or a picture-house the behaviour of the educated and the uneducated alike argues the absence of social discipline.

I was invited by a group of college students to dine with them one evening. Unfortunately more than the expected number of guests had arrived (an event and the opposite of it not unusual in this country). When one big table had been served the manager discovered that he had run short of a few plates. He apologised and requested that a few minutes be granted him to complete the arrangements. The arrangements were soon complete but when the second table cut its first morsel the first had been half through the meal.

Social sense implies patience or 'tension capacity' as some psychologists call it. It is the control of yourself in favour of another. It is being very conscious of another's interests, often keeping them before your own. One day I was riding a bicycle. While turning a corner I ran into a car. I was thrown off the bicycle. It was a close shave. In about two minutes I had

recovered myself. But I found I was alone ; the car had disappeared. The occupants of the car, thinking I was injured, had run away from that place so that they might not have to face the police. Pausing to help the injured was a thought foreign to their minds. And this is not a solitary instance.

Social sense implies meeting man as man. One day on a railway station I came across a poor blind man. The train was about to start and he was asking aloud to be taken into a compartment. I offered to guide him to a third class compartment. When I presented him before one, the ' gentlemen ' inside cried aloud : ' Take him away. There is no room here. ' There was enough of room inside the compartment but none inside the ' gentlemen. '

In summer water-stalls are put up in our streets. The passers-by stop for a while to slake their thirst. How often a poor soul is seen wistfully looking at the jars of water and finding that there is no glass set apart for his caste passes on disappointed. Meeting man as man. Where do we find in this country ? The Hindu child is fed on ideals of Truth, Brahm-charya, Pativrata and other personal virtues, because they lead to Moksha, the intrinsic good, for which every Hindu is asked to strive.

The story of Harish Chandra who parted with his kingdom for the sake of a word ; of king Dashratha who sent his most beloved son, Rama, into exile in order to keep a promise he had given to one of his wives ; of Yudhishtira, the model of Truth, who entered Heaven with the earthly body but with one finger damaged because he had spoken untruth once, are great epics which were bound to produce giants of Truth and Honesty. But the ideal of personal salvation smothered the social side of human personality. There are, no doubt, beautiful passages in Hindu literature which say that for the wise and the good the whole of the world is one family and that the highest virtue is to see " God " in every figure. But these ideals were seldom reduced to practice in the form of training. For instance, The Red Cross Society, First Aid to the Injured and like movements represent the ideal of the brotherhood of man in a concrete form. Such movements have at their back a philosophy of life, whose first article of faith is the welfare of man, denuded of all external coverings. " Who is my neighbour ? " Jesus was asked by a lawyer. And he answered : " A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him off his raiment and wounded

him, and departed, leaving him half-dead.

“ And by chance there came a certain priest that way and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

“ And likewise a Levite when he was at the place, came and looked on him and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was, and when he saw him, had compassion on him.

“ And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out twopence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, ‘Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.’

“ Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves ”?

“ And he said, ‘He that showed mercy on him.’ Then said Jesus unto him, “Go, and do thou likewise.”

From the social point of view this is the kernel of the teaching of Jesus. But in India it has made no headway. The fact is that a change in Faith does not change the unconscious pattern unless one changes it consciously

and determinedly. The Christian in India, in general behaviour, does not differ much from the Hindu. He is as other-worldly, lethargic, fatalistic and self-centred as the Hindu. Only he has modified his living by adopting some western modes of social life which, to our mind, is a gain.

MUSLIM CLASS-SENSE

Muslims are aggressive Hindus with an exaggerated class-sense. They do not believe in the brotherhood of man. They want the brotherhood of Muslims only. Among themselves they are extremely democratic. The king and the serf are levelled down to the same mat, the same mug and the same hookah. But only the Muslim king and the Muslim serf. In imitation of The Red Cross Society they would have The Red Crescent Society to help only Muslim war-sufferers. In the pit of suffering, the hat, the turban and the fez disappear; but Muslims do not seem to think so. "In that sense Islam is, if we may so express it, a democratic caste, a kind of freemasonry whose members are, at least in theory, equal as amongst themselves, but with a class-barrier which separates them from an immeasurably inferior non-Muslim world."*

* O' Leary: *Islam at the Cross-Roads*.

Muslims polite to others. Unlike Hindus they feel very grateful to you if you do them a good turn and in consequence prove to be better friends. But their class-sense offers an interesting study and a serious problem. In practice the brotherhood of Islam does not mean that Muslims live in perfect harmony among themselves. It means that against a non-Muslim they rise to a man. When a Muslim is pitted against a non-Muslim every member of the community feels a call to help him. The merit of the situation is of no consideration. For a Muslim, however low his character, is regarded by his community as superior to a Hindu, Christian, Sikh or Parsi. This sentiment is remarkably strong. This sentiment was at the back of Maulana Shaukat Ali's mind when he declared at a public meeting that even the lowest Muslim was superior to Mahatma Gandhi, the Christ of the modern age. And this happened when the Maulana had been the Mahatma's right-hand man for a number of years. This is a phenomenon that is undermining Indian Society. Under its influence moral and legal standards are allowed to be set aside with impunity. To say nothing of simple acts, Muslims who have committed most despicable crimes against non-Muslims have been offered

the wing of protection by other Muslims. This raises serious difficulties in the way of maintaining social discipline.

A person who has a grain of nationalism in him and feels that this sentiment is going to destroy the very foundations of Indian society, cannot but shed long tears and pray for the rise of a group of Muslims who would bring its people on the path of the Law. If such a group does not appear in the near future there is intense suffering in store for non-Muslims and Muslims alike. We are not pronouncing a divine curse. We are only stating a natural law. It is like this. Muslims cannot save their brothers who have done provable wrongs unless they develop the art of lying and develop it to perfection. Non-Muslims under the influence of the instinct of self-preservation must ultimately do the same. In consequence, the society goes back to the jungle. In another way the policy of Muslims is self-destructive. Suppose they come into full power at a place where non-Muslims are reduced to insignificance, not being accustomed to rigid moral habits they will fail to build up a wholesome and enduring society. This is a psychological law which must operate. The law is hidden from the human eye but it has its revenges in

uncanny ways. Every time you break it you remove a corner-stone of your character. If you persist in your ways the crash must come one day.

The aggressiveness of Muslims is another disturbing factor in Indian Society. As an example, take some of their festivals. When they arrive, the country begins to quake. On the day following the Id the columns of morning newspapers are full of relief-news that the Id passed off quietly at this place and that. Nobody has ever seen the caption : " Christmas passed off quietly." How many Muslims feel that this is a slur on the fair name of Islam, the religion of ' Peace ' and ' Submission ' to the Laws of God ?

Of late a movement to cut themselves off from the rest of India has started among them. They ask for a part of the country where they should be allowed to lead a life exclusively their own and of which they should be complete masters. They say they have a separate culture and that they have a right to develop it on their own. The best minds in India are dismayed at the daring with which the claim for a separate existence is made. Yet there is nothing strange about it. Natural processes lead to natural results and their cry to become separate is the inevitable result of a process which began many

years ago. Political forces made Muslims conscious of themselves. This consciousness brought with it a sense of contrast with other communities which were far ahead of them intellectually and financially. A feeling of inferiority arose. The pampering political forces did not allow them to adjust themselves to this feeling. The more they were favoured the more the inferiority feeling deepened until it took the form of an inferiority complex. That is, the feeling of inferiority quitted the conscious mind and entered the unconscious, a very dangerous happening from the point of view of the health of the mind.

There are various forms of behaviour which an inferiority complex gives birth to. One of them is 'persecution mania' which makes the victim feel that there are forces all around him, trying to crush him. This will easily explain why in the last decade Muslims openly declared that there was a conspiracy to destroy their culture and turn them out of this country. Persecution mania is always a fib, a false, unconscious defence against the feeling of inferiority but it takes a heavy toll of the peace of mind. It has meant Muslims long hours of mental anguish. It still persists among the mass of the educated. It may have disappeared from

among those who have come into possession of political power and in consequence feel superior. The demand for a separate existence is also the result of the inferiority complex. It is a defence mechanism against the fear of competition and contrast, reinforced by the class-sense. The desire for separation would not have become so strong if the Indian National Congress had been truly national and if the country had not fallen into the hands of a mahatma.

GANDHI

The study of the last twenty years or so is interesting to a psychologist, distressing to a patriot and the one who is both must feel anguish over every word that goes to compose the tale of the Tyranny of an Unnational Ideology. Mr. Gandhi, the author of this ideology, had tried an experiment in South Africa. The experiment had consisted in securing certain rights for Indian settlers through non-violent non-co-operation with the authorities. The experiment had succeeded. In a triumphant mood Mr. Gandhi came to India. The Great War was on. India was anxiously expecting to become the recipient of a gift in the form of political rights from Great Britain

in lieu of the great services she was rendering during the war. The war ended in 1918. Early in 1919 the British Government with the idea of maintaining peace and order in the country passed a law known as The Rowlatt Act. Indian leaders took it as an insult offered to one of the most devoted allies of the British. They felt it was a black Act inflicted upon them to crush their civil liberties. Mr. Gandhi stepped on the political stage and offered to lead an agitation against the Act with the technique he had followed in South Africa. Thus he got an opportunity to try his non-violent non-co-operation on a bigger scale. A detailed programme of boycott was worked out and launched with great enthusiasm. Mr. Gandhi wanted his voice to reach every corner of the country. For that purpose an all-India tour was necessary. He found a horse. Its name was Khilafat. It had already lost its legs. The Ali Brothers offered their own and on it Mr. Gandhi went round the country invading temple and mosque alike. For the first time an unbeliever was allowed to address 'Khutbas' in mosques.

It was a day of triumph for Mr. Gandhi. But his personal triumph settled the hash of Indian nationalism. He had made a contract

with the Ali Brothers: 'You ask your community to support my agitation. I shall lead the Congress in favour of Khilafat.' This was a diplomatic move on his part, the only diplomatic move he made in his life and that was fundamentally wrong. There was no relation, not even a superficial one, between a political agitation and a religious movement. It never occurred to Mr. Gandhi that in asking Musalmans to concentrate on Khilafat instead of India's political demands he was keeping them aloof from the political aspirations of the country and thus depriving them of political education. It never entered his mind that Islam like Buddhism and Christianity was just an incident in the life-history of India and Musalmans were as much children of the soil as Hindus and Christians. It never crossed his blessed brain that for the Congress to support Khilafat was asking Musalmans to hitch their wagon to the star of Turkey; that is, to remain Musalmans and never become Indians.

Perhaps Mr. Gandhi could not have thought other than the way he did. He was a Hindu and not a nationalist. He was heading a political movement and not a national one. As we shall presently show he was so orthodox a Hindu that it was difficult for him to start a

really national movement. In short, Indian Musalmans from the very start remained a separated bloc. Through sheer wrong thinking on the part of Mr. Gandhi they had been made so.

The mass mind works at the perceptual level. Concrete visual and auditory images move it to action. In other words, for a political and national movement to go with single-minded effectiveness there should be one uniform, one slogan and a single-aim flag. Mr. Gandhi emphasised the use of khaddar but not the shape in which it should clothe the body. Stark ignorance of simple laws that govern the working of the human mind! Manufacturers of Lanchashire might have been seriously affected but nothing was gained by way of national unity. For that purpose it was the form and not the fabric that really mattered. The Musalman by putting on khaddar in Muslim fashion may feel that he is injuring British interests but he will never feel that he has become one with the Hindu. That is, he begins to feel politically but not a bit nationally. Pictures of political leaders bunched together appear in newspapers. They are so dressed that the Muslim eye selects the Muslim leader, the Hindu the Hindu leader, the Sikh the Sikh. Under these circumstances it is impossible to

educate the mass mind nationally.

The ear was as indifferently treated as the eye. Big political processions that made so much noise had always more than one slogan. There was 'Bande Matram'; there was 'Allah-ho-Akbar'; and there was in the Punjab at least 'Sat Sri Akal'. And while the Hindu said: 'Down with the British Raj', the Muslim sang: 'O Kamal: turn the reins of your horse towards India.'

And look at the national flag, the most uninspiring sign ever evolved by a country. Hindus, Muslims and others are laid side by side. Such a juxtaposition can never be tolerated by a truly nationalistic leader. This flag expresses the psychology of those who accept conditions of life without demur and then try to make a tolerable adjustment to them. This is the psychology of cowards. The brave change the conditions themselves.

! Thus there was nothing in the movement of Mr. Gandhi which could create a nation. Signs and symbols with their remarkably suggestive power unite people and not the beautifully-worded pi-jaws of mahatmas. Take again the title of address. In trying to become Swadeshi the members of the Congress were encouraged to discontinue addressing people as

Mr. They were asked to use Swadeshi titles. So Shriyuta, Maulana and other forms sprang up into attention. Absurd! This was an occasion to evolve one form of address and make use of it with tenacity. But the occasion was missed.

The general behaviour of Mahatma Gandhi—from now onwards we shall call him Mahatma—was so Hindu that it could not have drawn Musalmans. A national leader, whatever his private life, cannot afford to appear in public as the representative of a particular sect. If he wants to educate the mass mind on national lines he should have a neutral, national figure whenever he appears before the public. But the Mahatma declared so many times in the press that he was a Sanatanist, the believer in the divine origin of the caste system, the worshipper of the cow and the follower of the ideal of Moksha. When he appeared in public he had visible marks of an orthodox Hindu on his body. When on political tour he led Hindu prayers and showed that he was a great devotee of the Bhagavad Gita. Above all, he repeated more than once that he was proud of being a Hindu. The accumulated impression of all this behaviour on the Muslim mind was that the head of the great political movement in this

country was a Hindu. The result was that after twenty years' leadership of the Mahatma the Hindus became more political and the Muslims, only a superficial appendage to the movement, greater Muslims.

The Mahatma had made Hindu-Muslim unity a plank in the Congress programme. After twenty years' jaw-breaking sermons he found that nothing had been achieved towards that end. He could not have realized that his own mental make-up was mainly responsible for his failure. In order to be a true national leader one must become *general* in shape and behaviour and much of what is *particular* about one must be shed. But the Mahatma could not shed it and, whether you like it or not, failed to become the national leader, in the strict sense of the word 'national'. A person with a different mental constitution would have attracted the Muslims and made them a part of the national movement, if he had worked as enthusiastically as the Mahatma did. Forces other than the Mahatma had cut the potato into two. The Mahatma naively accepted the halves. He should have refused to believe in the existence of the halves and educated the public on this point. But he proceeded to join them together and with all the 'Soul-force' at his command breathed

upon them the sacred Mantram : ' Join ! Join !! Join !!! ' But the halves went further apart and the First Man in India bleated like a lost lamb : ' O God of The Holy Quran and The Bhagavad Gita, where are you ? ' Perhaps the ' inner voice ' answered : ' Not my will, but thine, be done. ' A most dangerous statement followed from his pen. ' If the eight crores of Muslims desire it (Pakistan) no power on earth can prevent it, notwithstanding opposition, violent or non-violent. ' It was a dangerous statement because its effect on the mass mind was disastrous. Those who were fighting for national unity were discouraged and those who were crying for Pakistan were encouraged. The statement betrayed defeatism on the part of the Mahatma. In the year 1940 there was nobody more sad than the Mahatma. In a letter which he wrote to the Secretary of the Association for the spread of Urdu he said, " I am fallen on evil days. A cloud of distrust is hanging over my head. What was acclaimed by Muslim friends with joy at one time is to-day distorted and quoted against me. "

Such a statement excites sympathy in the hearts of those who appreciate sincerity. For the Mahatma is one of the few persons in the country whose sincerity is above question, who

wears his heart upon his sleeve and deals in nothing but truth. He has such moral greatness as not to embarrass his adversary when he is in difficulty and is thus the resplendent example of the essence of righteousness. But if with his moral constitution had been combined a modern scientific outlook on life he would have taken his country miles ahead. His economics of khaddar, his creed of non-violence, his dream of 'Rama Raj,' his belief in the trustee-ship of the rich and his 'inner voice' make up an ancient mind, far removed from the intricate problems of the modern world. This is the tragedy of the whole situation. The historian, who would record that the influence of the Mahatma on the general tone of our people's life was beneficial, must have his tongue in his cheek. Courtesy apart, his influence on Indian society has been definitely retrogressive.

Abler minds have discussed his economics of khaddar. We may take up his non-violence and 'inner voice' and reflect over them a little.

Non-violent non-cooperation was a welcome political weapon for a nation without arms. When Mahatma Gandhi offered it in 1919 the people of India gladly accepted it and used it

with a degree of success. Non-violent non-co-operation is resistance to evil through self-immolation. It is based on the belief that suffering on your part melts the heart of your opponent and he is inwardly compelled to accept your demands. This is true in certain cases, false in others. All depends on the nature of your demand, the nature of the opponent and your status. For instance, a beggar asks for a thousand rupees from a rich man who refuses to part with them. The beggar lies down at his door and threatens to die there if the former does not accede to his request. This may touch the heart of the rich man and he may offer him a thousand rupees. But if the beggar asks for the hand of the rich man's daughter in marriage, the rich man, most probably, would let him die rather than accede to his request. Now, suppose an educated young man, decent but very poor, makes the same request and being refused employs the same tactics. The rich man may give in or he may be persuaded to do so. Non-violent resistance may succeed because the status of the young man is different from that of the beggar. It may not succeed because the rich man is adamant. He would much sooner die than compromise his self-respect. Mahatma Gandhi himself succeeded against Dr. Ambedkar

and Durbar Virawala because he was Mahtama Gandhi. Any other person of ordinary status would have been allowed to die. Even in the case of Mahatma Gandhi the nature of the demand will determine the measure of success to be achieved through non-violent resistance. Suppose he asks the Government of India to release certain political prisoners. The Government cannot see their way to do so. He goes into a fast and is prepared to die if the prisoners are not released. The Government may climb down and release the prisoners. But if the Mahatma announces that if the British Government does not offer Complete Independence to India within a week he will fast unto death. His demand has not the ghost of a chance to be accepted and the inevitable will happen. It is clear that non-violent resistance does not always succeed. It is a weapon that may be used with intelligence if it suits the nature of the case.

Non-violence as a philosophy of life is different. It demands that all aggression be met with love and non-violence. It consists in making an appeal to the good sense of the aggressor, closing the appeal with the remark: 'You may kill me, but I will not raise my arm against you.' This will succeed if the aggressor is as tender-hearted and philosophical as the supplicant.

Such individuals may exist here and there but such communities and nations are nowhere to be found. Aggressors, as we know them too well, would rather welcome such an attitude on our part. They will clean us out of our coveted possessions and if they are shrewd, in return, confer on us the titles of Buddha and Christ. In the world, as it is constituted, non-violence as a creed cannot be appreciated by the aggressor and unless one's philosophy of life is voluntary poverty one cannot afford to lose one's material and moral possessions at the hands of the evil-doer. The evil-doer may be an evil-doer from habit and non-violence has little chance of modifying his behaviour. For the maintenance of peace and the up-keep of moral and legal standards harsh measures have to be adopted now and then. Mahatma Gandhi zealously reads the Bhagavad Gita every morning. He ought to have realized that the great message of the Gita was delivered to exhort Arjuna to take up arms against evil. No other person tried more than Lord Krishna to avoid the conflict by persuading Duryodhana to accede to the minimum demand of the Pandava brothers. But Duryodhana was so hard-hearted and egotistic that he refused to listen to the wise counsels of Krishna and told him with unabashed tenacity that he was not willing

to concede even as much as 'the point of a needle'. The saturation point having been reached, there was no other alternative for the Pandavas except to take up arms. They did and the author of the Gita was with them. 'Return good for evil' is a great maxim. We neither deny its greatness nor discourage its practice. But we know that sometimes the evil is of such a nature that with all our love we may have to wait for astronomical years before we are able to effect any appreciable change in it. For the maintenance of society we are very often required to take immediate action and resort to force. Even Jesus, the symbol of non-violence and the messenger of peace and good-will on earth "went into the temple of God, and cast out all those that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves." Mahatma Gandhi who has been compared to Christ wants to go one better. He makes no exception in the practice of non-violence which, thus, becomes an almost impossible creed for the common man to follow. With the average person it is bound to become a cover, a 'rationalization' for the white feather lurking in the secret chamber of his soul. The Indian tradition places abnormally high ideals before the common

man. For long centuries the average person has not been encouraged to behave as a normal human being. He has been asked to move in ethereal regions, nearer Heaven than Earth. In the effort to do so the poor Indian has lost his manly virtues.

Now to the 'inner voice' which has held the imagination of the masses for the last two decades. When the Mahatma says that the momentous decisions of his life have been dictated by an 'inner voice' he seems to imply that the decisions are not human; they are divine. This 'inner voice', he calls the Voice of God. This, coupled with his habits of saying prayers at 3 o'clock in the morning, keeping silence on Mondays, remaining almost naked, calling his house an 'ashram', his gentleness, his vegetarianism, makes up a figure with a halo of mystery round it, that has an extraordinary appeal to the mystic imagination of India. Such a figure alone could draw like a magnet the uneducated masses of this country who go by the word of saints and prophets and wait for God's incarnations to come and deliver them from their difficulties. This is the secret of the Mahatma's popularity. The sage, the man of God, the incarnation of Truth, the miracle-maker, that is the image the masses carry in their minds

and the image is not a foreign intruder. It answers the description of their own deep-seated ideals. Thus the Mahatma is an epitome of the mass mind of India. This made the Mahatma great, no doubt; but left the masses where they were, completely uneducated as regards the realities of the modern world.

On the 'inner voice' modern psychology has thrown much light. Not only mahatmas but artists and poets also are governed by the inner voice. Ordinary mortals too, sometimes, have such flashes of insight with respect to various decisions of life. The process is like this. Suppose a person is battling with a problem. After hard thinking he still fails to perceive the right solution. He gives up the struggle. After some time, engaged in another task or just sitting idly, he is surprised to find that the wished-for solution has flashed up all of a sudden. The explanation of this phenomenon is simple. Even though the conscious mind gives up the struggle with respect to a problem, the unconscious does not and when the solution is ready it throws it up into the conscious mind. Sometimes you cannot remember a particular name. It may be on the tip of your tongue but it does not come into consciousness. You give it up for lost but after a while or next day it pops up unexpectedly

and you are amazed. You may call it a mysterious flash, an inspiration, an inner voice or God's voice. It is only an act of your own mind of which you are not aware. Poets, artists, certain writers and some laymen generally think at the unconscious level. For instance, a poet seldom composes his poems with the conscious application of the laws of prosody. The poem is composed by the unconscious mind. It later on ascends to the conscious mind, when it may be spoken, sung or written. The unconscious mind of the artist makes the image; the conscious mind transfers it to the canvas or the marble. Though it is the peculiarity of certain persons to make use of the Unconscious mind more than the conscious mind, any body can form the habit of using the unconscious that way. Think of a problem for a while, then leave it alone and almost forget it. It will be solved for you and in the meantime you can engage yourself in some other task. In this way you can harness the forces of your own nature to your advantage. This is the scientific view of the matter. If you feel that every time you have such an inspiration God has spoken, you are adopting the religious point of view, the point of view that does not add to the infinite glory of God but degrades man to the

position of a robot.

Again, it does not mean that the unconscious solution of the problem is always correct. It only means that you have not arrived at it through conscious reasoning. Mahatma Gandhi's own admission regarding the 'Rajkot fast' clears the point. Says he, "The important thing to note about it is how a pure undertaking can become tainted *owing to lack of watchfulness on the part of the doer.*"* There can be no room for selfishness, anger, lack of faith, or impatience in a pure fast. It is no exaggeration to admit that all these defects crept into my Rajkot fast. My selfishness lay in the fact that inasmuch as its being given up depended on certain conditions being fulfilled by the late Thakore Saheb, I had in me the selfish desire for the realisation of the fruit of my labour. . If there had been no anger in me, I would not have looked to the Viceroy for assistance. My love should have deterred me from doing so. For if he was really as a son to me, why should I have complained about him to his overlord? I betrayed want of faith in that I thought the Thakore Saheb would not be melted by my love and I was impatient to break the fast. All these shortcomings were bound to make my

* Italics ours.

fast impure." In short, the 'inner voice' may give false guidance. Its messages, before being executed, must be thoroughly examined by conscious reasoning.

Human personality has been most shabbily treated by almost all mahatmas and saints of India. It is time that they cried halt and allowed man to discover himself. In doing so God's dignity will in no way be lowered but man's will be raised. Mahatma Gandhi's behaviour amounted to denying human personality. Under his leadership the non-scientific attitude towards life was further strengthened. In July 1940, he made an appeal to the British to adopt the method of non-violence against the aggression of Hitler. When the appeal was condemned as absolutely unfeasible, he wrote, "That the appeal has not produced the intended result shows that either my mind has no power or that God has a purpose of which we have no knowledge." This is typical of the Mahatma and has been both his strength and weakness. He believes that his words should have potency enough to change the traditional habits of a whole nation. When they fail to produce even the semblance of the intended effect he attributes the failure to deficiency of his mysterious soul-force or still more mysterious purposes

of God. This is a very primitive way of looking at things. And this does not allow him to see the world with the eyes of science. He ought to study the laws under which character, both individual and national, is built up. He ought to know that the character of a nation cannot be changed through pulpit-preaching extending over days and months. That his appeal to the British nation does not produce the desired effect is due to their peculiar character-build and the peculiar situation they are in. It has no relation with the potency of his words. And to bring in God at the time of failure is a way to blanket defeatism and get false consolation. This is a very unscientific way which puts a permanent brake on human progress. What progress can you expect of a people who are made to believe, and in the twentieth century, that the Bihar earthquake is a divine punishment for the sins the people of the province have committed against Harijans? The only scientific act the Mahatma did in his life was to save a sick calf from agony by getting it killed. And he did it with apologies. It will require all the blood and sweat of many a patriot of the future to undo what the Mahatma has done, to discourage what he has encouraged.

LOW MORAL TONE

Another source of India's suffering is the low moral tone backed by public opinion. Our decisions regarding important matters are determined by foolish ideas of friendship, party influences, communalism, palm oil and the merit of the case, the last one becoming less and less important with every day that passes by. Take a judge trying an important case. Ask him whether he is allowed to concentrate on the merit of the case. Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of India, in his inaugural address at the Indian Penal Reform Conference held in February, 1940, made a very significant statement to this effect. "I have never met a judge in India who did not refer to the difficulty of arriving at the truth in criminal cases; and indeed a friend of my own tells me that he is a strong advocate of the abolition of the capital sentence in murder cases solely on the ground that owing to the prevalence of hard swearing he can never feel absolutely certain that the right verdict has been arrived at."

It is also true that a judge himself may not be inclined to discover the truth. Here is an example. A boy, named Abdur Rahman, murdered, in broad daylight, another boy, named

Harbans Singh in Gujrat, a town in the Punjab. The two boys were class-fellows at the Government Intermediate College. The police were too slow to begin investigation and later K. B. Sheikh Din Mohammad, Sessions Judge, who tried the case, acquitted the accused. From the order of the Sessions Judge an appeal was made to the High Court of Judicature at Lahore. The appeal was heard by Mr. Justice Monroe and Mr. Justice Blacker. We give below extracts from their judgment which throw light on the prejudiced mind of the Sessions Judge.

“Abdur Rahman was charged before the Sessions Judge, Gujranwala, with the murder of Harbans Singh and was acquitted. Abdur Rahman and Harbans Singh were school-fellows at the Government Intermediate College, Gujrat. Both were in the 10th class and were about the same age, fifteen years. On the 18th of October, 1938, the dead body of Harbans Singh was found a few minutes after 10 A.M. at a short distance from the wall of the college compound. There can be no doubt that Harbans Singh was murdered. The murder was committed in the centre of a populous area, at a place a little more than a hundred yards from the Subordinate Judge's court. The time was 10 A.M. at which there must have been many people in

the vicinity and it is one of the peculiar features of the case that no one seems to have known anything of the murder until the dead body was seen by accident.

“A further peculiar and most regrettable circumstance is the attitude adopted by the learned judge towards the witnesses connected with the college. It is clear that the learned judge allowed himself to be influenced by prejudice; he assumed, it would appear, that these witnesses were desirous of securing a conviction. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The learned judge's method of approaching the case can be appreciated by a perusal of the whole of his judgment; but it is indicated by the following passage: ‘When approaching this case I had a very high expectation in my mind that the witnesses in this case being students of a collegiate school and professors of that institution there would be a most agreeable variety of witnesses to judge. The evidence of the professors was found limited to those trivial incidents which preceded this tragedy.’ Are the professors to blame for not being eye-witnesses or for not knowing facts which would lead to a conviction? Are they to blame because the incidents which preceded the tragedy and to which they testify are trivial, if that is

a fair description of them? In my opinion this aspersion on the professors of the college is wholly unjustifiable. They were summoned as witnesses and told what they knew in all honesty.

“The case for the prosecution is strongly corroborated by the evidence of Fateh Ali, Police Constable. This evidence also has been swept aside as ‘padding’ and, again, in my opinion, without reason. The last thing that can be suggested about this case is that the police manifested a desire to obtain a conviction. No reason appears why Fateh Ali should thrust himself into a case in which he has no official concern for the purpose of giving false evidence. Fateh Ali’s evidence was that on the day before the murder at about 5 P.M. he visited the shop of Abdulla blacksmith, in connection with the purchase of a bicycle. Abdur Rahman was present when Fateh Ali arrived and the blacksmith was holding in his hand a knife which he had been sharpening for Abdur Rahman. Fateh Ali took the knife in his hand and felt the edge which was very keen. He asked Abdur Rahman whether he wanted to rip any one open. To which the reply was that the knife was for kitchen use. When the witness heard of the murder and that Abdur

Rahman had been charged, he immediately informed his head of what he knew.

"In my opinion, the proved facts in this case lead one to one conclusion only and that is that Abdur Rahman murdered Harbans Singh a few minutes after 9-30 on the 18th of October, 1938. On account of his extreme youth I do not think that it would be proper to impose the death sentence, though from every other aspect his crime merits the severest possible punishment.

17th October, 1939.

(Sd.) J. H. MONROE."

"I have no hesitation in agreeing fully with my learned brother's judgment and in the order which he proposes to pass. There can be, in my judgment, no doubt that the murderer of Harbans Singh was the respondent, Abdur Rahman and the acquittal of the latter in the Sessions Court can only be described as a very grave miscarriage of justice.

(Sd.) H. A. C. BLACKER."

To our shame it may be said that this is only an instance of the conditions that are fairly common. Under such conditions the word 'judge' hallowed by the tradition of ages loses all meaning. The pity is that even important members of our society do not encourage a person who is conscious of the pristine glory of

Reason and tries to preserve it. Everybody wants favours and one trying to concentrate on the merits and demerits of a situation is a stranger among one's own people.

Law is slowly abdicating in favour of *Sifarish*. In seeking absolution from a guilt, in securing a job, nay, even in passing an examination, 'sifarish' is more important than rules specified for the purpose. To make matters worse, public opinion lends it strong support. The end is regarded as more important than the means. The means may be fair or foul, very often foul, the end must be secured. If you are an officer of some consequence, your personal history, including your associates and friends, is sedulously traced and kept handy for use. Some years ago I had to examine an Intermediate paper of the Punjab University. A certain gentleman approached a friend of mine and requested him to ask me to help his boy by examining the latter's answer-book very leniently. My friend asked the gentleman how he had come to know that the examiner was his great friend. The gentleman revealed that he had during the past two weeks visited all the places in the province where the examiner had lived from time to time, trying to find out who his pals were and he knew that at last he was

talking to the right man.

I was a bit shocked, but that was a very common case. People have the courage to ask you to break rules in their favour. You have not the courage to say 'no.' It is difficult to meet persons in this country who can say 'no' to such demands. If there are any, they must plough their lonely furrows. There are few to support them. They must become very brave to maintain their standards of conduct. Many young men start with strong resolves to do the right but the adverse influences upon them are so overwhelming that they soon go under and join the army of 'good fellows' whom the public admire.

False certificates are as easily demanded as given. Jobs are advertised after the selections have taken place. Teachers are forced to affix signatures to the amount of salary they never receive. In many municipal towns sanitary inspectors have a monthly share of the salaries of sweepers under them. These are just a few examples of things that have become so habitual that they are taken for granted. A police officer who says that he does not take any bribe is condemned as a big liar. An honest police officer is looked upon as a symbol of stupidity. And so in regard to many other profes-

sions. Money makes the mare go and 'sifarish' is the wheel that controls the social machinery. The favourite questions a stranger asks you are : What is your profession? What is your salary? What over and above it? The last question is regarded as a matter of course.

Corruption is too mild a word for this state of affairs. It is complete moral chaos. During the last few years anti-corruption departments have been set up. But the disease has gone so deep that they cannot achieve much. Sir Douglas Young, the Chief Justice of the Punjab, presiding over a lecture on 'Corruption in Public Services,' remarked : 'What can the anti-corruption department do if its own officers are corrupt?'

In these circumstances the poor and those without pull, though possessing sterling merit, are forced to smother their ambitions. They know that their future has been cut from beneath their feet and if they do not become neurotics must seek consolation in some form of Fatalism. And there are people who are perfectly at peace with themselves because they have accepted this chaos as God's will or the decree of Fate.

A certain big educational officer was on tour. As is the custom with such officers, he allowed

interviews to teachers of the town he was stopping in for the time. As usual one by one the teachers came with their grievances and claims and having spoken their hearts went away. The last person to come in, though aggrieved like the rest, was without any papers. When asked what he wanted, he replied, 'nothing.' Why had he come in? To pay respects. Here was a "daisy" who appeared to have completely reconciled himself to his unhappy lot. But his attitude is a sad and silent commentary on the most disheartening conditions in which we have to live.

That people belonging to professions are public servants is a conception unknown in this country. The intellectuals may talk about it but one does not see it in practice. 'What can I do for you?' 'Sorry, could not satisfy you,' are words completely foreign to our shopkeepers. Excessive profits being the sole aim in business, purity of wares has to be doubted and justly so. Hospitals are meant for the rich. The number of doctors who act like slot-machines is shamefully large. It is an unending tale of veiled barbarism.

A NEW ORDER

The country is swarming with human beings whose number has been steadily on the increase. But men are rare. One day I had a phantasy. I saw a big gate, on which was written: 'The Gate of the World.' I entered it. There were leeches, reptiles, grass-hoppers and a variety of monsters. I cried: "Where are men?" A thunder rose in the East. I waited. It mellowed into a soft voice which said, "We produce only natural species. Men must be created."

Men must be created through our own effort, and a prolonged and steady effort. The New Order has to be earned by the sweat of the brow. It is not a natural selection. It is not a question of God said: 'Light'; and there was Light. Backed by an intense desire teams of men and women will have to bruise their hands in the effort to remodel society.

What are the characteristics of men we want to create? Our men are social and intensely social, Indians and intensely Indians. The word 'Hindu' or 'Muslim' strikes their ears as the word 'Jew' strikes the ears of Hitler. They feel they are born to live and live well. They are out to create conditions for a good and happy living. Heaven and Hell or any other life here-

after do not worry them. They are independent and self-directed. They accept moral standards and follow them rigidly. They have a scientific attitude towards life and firmly believe in the infinite possibilities of human nature. Happy warriors of *here and now* they use science in the service of humanity and spend their energies in creating a world founded on the Brotherhood of Man.

The remodelling of a society means the replacing of old habits by new ones. When we break certain habits we have to adopt three lines of action. We have, in the first place, to cut off all stimuli that tend to nurse those habits. Secondly, we have to produce in us an intellectual conviction that the said habits are futile. Thirdly, we have to substitute new patterns for the old and without allowing for exceptions encourage them at every step of the process. Often force may have to be applied to help break the neck of the old patterns.

We have said above that the main sources of India's social suffering are a deep-rooted other-worldly philosophy of life which allows little interest in this world, communalism which breeds all-round mistrust and makes living unsavoury, low morality that makes honest living hard and exploitation of certain classes by others

resulting in sharp contrasts that bring in fatalism. Add to these the low position of women and misunderstood religion to complete the ugly picture. The reformer who views these evils critically knows that a stupendous task lies before him. But he also knows that all such tasks are stupendous. Their magnitude and stiffness inspire him with added strength. With the optimism that is inborn in him he goes ahead with methods that modern science has placed at his disposal. Pulpit-preaching has never effected any great reform and whenever social reform was achieved a scientific technique was at work, applied consciously or unconsciously.

Let us take the sources of suffering one by one and see how we can destroy them. Number one is other-worldliness, fatalism and a desire for personal salvation. This is one of the ways through which the human mind tries to escape from the difficulties of life. Sorrows which afflict man offer a stubborn challenge. He may accept the challenge and fight and destroy them. He may not accept it and refuse to fight. In that case he will try to slip into conceptions of Heaven and Hell, a life hereafter or Moksha or Nirvana and in times of difficulty console himself through some form of Fatalism. The first way is social; the second is personal and

selfish. Eastern countries; and India particularly, have been following the second path. The task before us is to take India away from the path of the runaway and bring her on to the path of the warrior. This can be achieved by producing in her mind a conviction that human effort counts and by removing all stimuli that strengthen the belief in human helplessness. The conviction can be secured through a scientific education and through the knowledge of how much man has been able to achieve so far. But this conviction will never take a firm root in the mind unless the sense of helplessness is lessened by making the environment less trying. A little of fatalism is natural to man but the cult of fatalism arises out of a peculiar environment. Wherever economic insecurity and sharp contrasts of life prevail fatalism is inevitable. It is a defence-mechanism adopted by the mind against the cruelty and injustice of circumstances. If the mechanism is weak neurosis, mentally-caused physical ailments and suicide step in. If you want to wean a people from fatalism, give them two square meals a day and reduce social contrasts to a minimum. On this foundation alone a superstructure of a scientific attitude towards life can be built.

As regards the desire for Moksha or Nirvana,

it is the central pivot of the Hindu mind. Aided by economic security a steady and very vigorous propaganda will loosen the grasp it has on the Hindu mind. A general decree on the part of the State, that all teaching connected with Nirvana is banned, is an essential step. Sadhus and Sanyasis should be asked to stay away from habitation under threat of punishment and no person from town or village, unless he is completely useless to society, should be allowed to visit them. Every child should be taught that these Sanyasis have sucked India's life-blood and are as dangerous as any fatal disease could be.

The main causes of communalism are political, which freely play upon the general selfishness of the people. To discuss them is outside the scope of this book. We can only suggest that if social stimuli to communal feeling are controlled much of its sting will be removed. Take for instance, a Pentangular Tournament. It is a strong stimulus to fan communal feelings. It is a pity that even the Congress Government in Bombay did not care to stop it. Some people think that a tournament run on communal lines arouses remarkable enthusiasm and, therefore, is justified. Such a view displays a morbid taste and the argument is on a par with the argument that war brings out men's heroism, hence it

should never be abolished. It is Devil's cant. No organisation of any kind in which different communities come into emotional conflict with one another should be allowed to exist in this country.

The National Flag should be redesigned. Outside the four walls of the home there should be a common dress. The hat should be universally adopted by the civil population. Women should go out in saris only. All titles of address except Mr, Mrs. and Miss should be abolished. There should be one salutation for all occasions and hours. These suggestions, seemingly too simple, may be turned down. But those who are conversant with the working of the human mind know how such simple things, if followed relentlessly, achieve momentous results. From the externals the mind moves easily to the internals.

The political causes of communalism can be destroyed by a reorganisation of the State. It is too early to say what the future State of India will be like. Whatever its nature, from the psychological point of view, it should be competent to create a social *milieu* in which three fundamental demands of human nature, namely, hunger, self-assertion and sex are adequately satisfied.

Too much stress is being laid on the satisfaction of hunger to the exclusion of other impulses of human nature. Economic security, it is said, is the foundation of all social well-being. This is only a partial truth. Granted, unless everybody is able to secure adequate food, shelter and clothing for himself and his children, there can be no peace and harmony in the world. It is forgotten, however, that after achieving full economic security we do not eliminate all disturbing factors which may, at any time, lead to the breakdown of a social structure. The human ego with its inborn intelligence is jealous of its dignity and importance. When slighted it must, sooner or later, assert itself. This is as much true of the individual ego as of the national ego. Self-assertion is as fundamental as hunger. Everybody has an opinion about himself which he fondly nurses and is anxious to keep alive. When he is not allowed to do so he feels mutinous. Thus quarrels, bickerings and wars come into existence. The present war waged by Hitler is an act of self-assertion. His own ego he has identified with that of his nation. His Aryan cult with all its ramifications is an instance of asserting his own and his nation's superiority over other nations. No doubt, economic factors are there but 'the

will to power and superiority' in Hitler throws all other impulses into the shade. Thus self-assertion is an impulse which every State must recognise and make provision for its legitimate satisfaction. As with respect to hunger everybody is everybody else in respect to the demands of self-assertion. We may not agree in colour and creed but we do agree in our biological inheritance. States must recognise this inheritance and so reconstruct themselves that the major impulses are satisfied enough to make a quiet and peaceful life possible. If every member of a State feels that his economic wants are adequately satisfied and that he is not a mere worm, the State is well-founded. Such a State regards every member as an ego equal to every other ego and allows him equal liberty. In such a State, apart from natural differences of temperament, intelligence, abilities and inborn propensities, no other difference is recognised. Material amenities are brought to the door of everybody and every individual is given every facility to contribute his best to the welfare of the whole. In this way self-assertion's demand is adequately met. The same principle can be applied to a Commonwealth of Nations. Unless this principle is applied honestly humanity should give up

hope of peace and good-will on this earth. Great ethical principles were discovered long ago but humanity is as bad as ever. The reason for the failure is that professional moralists and churchmen lay the main stress on individual improvement. They forget that an individual is always a social being. Never for a moment is he cut off from a social structure which may help or hinder his ethical development. A social and political structure should be congenial to his development. And only that structure is so congenial which secures for every individual a reasonable satisfaction of his fundamental wants. This condition must be satisfied before education and pulpit-preaching can be effective.

There are two other impulses, an intelligent organisation of which leads to the mental health of a society. They are 'sex' and 'religion.' We shall discuss them in separate chapters.

MISUNDERSTOOD RELIGION

RELIGION

Religion is one's belief in a superhuman Power that is supposed to affect one's weal or woe. It is a belief that is born of necessity. Man's imperfections, the handicaps he has to face and the difficulties he is forced to undergo raise the need for a protector. Man sets up this protector as one competent to remove his difficulties. More than one protector may be set up. Thus arises the worship of gods or God. This may be regarded as one of the cleverest devices of the human mind to meet the snags of life. It is a way of adjustment and its discovery does credit to human intelligence.

It is difficult to enumerate all the troubles man is subjected to. Yet an attempt may be made to classify them roughly. Firstly, there are natural calamities. The Quetta Earthquake of 1937 may be taken as a typical example. A flourishing town, brimming with joys of life, perched on a hill, away from the scorching heat of the plains of Hindustan, is suddenly rocked into a convulsion and falls like a house of cards. In a few minutes a happy, smiling place is converted into a heap of ruins. An epidemic may

invade a town and before the very eyes of parents carry away their children, of husbands their wives, of wives their husbands. In this way through an uncanny arrangement love is terminated, friendship lost and the idols of worship broken unexpectedly.

Secondly, there are troubles arising out of human relations. Sons betray fathers; friends rise against friends; wives mistrust husbands and husbands go astray. Add to these bickerings between groups and wars between nations and you begin to admire the capacity of the human heart that endures all.

Thirdly, take bodily ailments. To fight them human intelligence has brought forth doctors and medicines, surgeons and instruments, psychiatrists and psycho-analysis. But diseases and remedies multiply correspondingly. The ancients said that this world is a pit of burning coals. And they were right. Man is posted in the centre of this pit. In his utter helplessness he raises his hands to a power or powers who, he supposes, will allay his suffering. This is religion, a cry of the anguish-smitten soul for help, guidance and strength.

Religion is man's appeal to an object who is supposed to be able to do what he himself cannot do. Its core is a conviction that such an

object exists, can be influenced in man's favour and is competent to effect changes desired by him. It is therefore a personal relation which the votary greatly values. Religious behaviour is not very different from other forms of behaviour where favours are asked for. When a person wants a favour from another he generally resorts to praising, coaxing and flattering. The same thing is found in prayer, the best expression of religion. Every prayer has two parts, praise of God or gods and an appeal for the fulfilment of a demand. Sometimes, often in primitive forms of religion, a material offering is also made. It is supposed that by such activities gods are appeased or pleased and condescend to show favours. But the kernel of prayer is an appeal for protection against any of the insecurities arising from unsatisfied wants, dangers from external reality and bad human relations. This is best shown in ancient Vedic prayers.

1. The fiend, O Agni, who designs to injure the essence of our food, kine, steeds, of bodies, May he, the adversary, thief and robber, sink to destruction, both himself and offspring.

2. If any wolf or robber fain would harm us, therefrom O Varuna, give thou us protection.

3. Grant us high fame, O Indra; grant riches, bestowing thousands, those fair fruits of earth

borne home in carts.

4. Unclose, our manly hero, thou for ever bounteous, yonder clouds, for us, thou irresistible.

5. The rich, the healer of disease who giveth wealth, increaseth store.

The prompt, may he be with us still.

6. Guard to old age, thy friend, O friend, eternal : O Agni, as immortal guard us mortals.

7. Long let our life, O Agni, be extended.

8. May he, deft-handed Tvastar, give us hero sons.

9. That he, the bounteous god, may find us sinless, who giveth from a distance like a father.

10. Savitar, god, send far away all sorrows and calamities ; and send us only what is good.

11. From untruth take me to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality.

These are simple and unaffected prayers of a people who lived an unsophisticated life in direct contact with nature. They ask for food, rain, wealth, sons and freedom from enemies, sorrows, sins and death, from Powers supposed to grant them.

Jesus taught his disciples to pray :

“ Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy Kingdom come ; Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil."

This is a prayer which seeks protection against economic insecurity, temptations, sins and moral imperfection in general. It is prefaced with a short praise of God.

Passages from Muslim prayers beautifully illustrate our point :

"Glory to Thee, O Allah and Thine is the praise and blessed is Thy name, and exalted is Thy Majesty, and there is none to be served beside Thee.

O Allah ! Keep faults as distant from us as the east is distant from the west ; O Allah ! Cleanse me of all faults as a white cloth is cleansed of dirt ;

O Allah ! Wash away my faults with water and snow and hail.

O Allah ! I ask Thy refuge from anxiety and grief, and I seek Thy refuge from lack of strength and laziness, and I seek Thy refuge from cowardice and niggardliness, and I seek Thy refuge from being overpowered by debt and the oppression of men ; O Allah ! suffice Thou me with what is lawful to keep me away from what is prohibited, and with

Thy grace make me free from want of what is besides Thee."

Request for moral good is the central theme of Quranic prayers. And yet the Prophet, when occasion demanded, also prayed for rain.

"When there had been a long draught, someone requested the Holy Prophet, while he was delivering the Friday sermons in the mosque, to pray for rain, as both men and cattle were suffering severely, and in response, the Prophet raised his hands and prayed to God for rain." (Bu. 11 : 35.)

Similarly he is reported to have prayed to God when there was excess of rain. (Bu. 11 : 35.)*

Thus religion with prayer as its main expression is one of the ways to meet difficulties of life. Those who are accustomed to pray, pray all the more at the time of a crisis and those who are not in the habit of praying begin to do so whenever their calm routine is violently disturbed. The head may become extremely scientific but it is not necessary that the heart should be as strong. And religion is mostly a matter of the heart. Even an agnostic in a tight place may raise his hands and say, " O

**The Religion of Islam* : Muhammad Ali.

God if there is God, save my soul, if there is soul."

Leuba addressed an enquiry to men of science regarding their belief in God. They were given three statements and were asked to mark which of the three was true for them.

1. I believe in a God in intellectual and affective communication with man, I mean a God to whom one may pray in the expectation of receiving an answer. By 'answer,' I do not mean the subjective, psychological effect of prayer.

2. I do not believe in a God as defined above.

3. I am an agnostic regarding this question.

The following figures indicate the percentage of believers in God :

GOD

		Less Distinguished	More Distinguished
Physical Scientists	...	49·7	34·8
Biologists	...	39·1	16·9
Historians	...	63·0	32·9
Sociologists	...	29·2	19·4
Psychologists	...	32·1	13·2

The above table is very instructive. It shows that even among distinguished scientists there is a number who cannot give up a belief in God. What about countless millions who are far below their intellectual level? So long as there is suffering in the world religion must remain as one of the ways to meet it. For religion is born of suffering and evil. In this connection the Holy Quran makes a very apt hint: 'And when We show favour to man, he turns aside and withdraws himself, and when evil touches him, he makes lengthy supplications.' (41:51).

"And when harm afflicts men, they call upon their Lord turning to Him." (30:33).

We have said that religion is one of the ways with which human beings meet difficulties. This may be illustrated with common facts from life. Suppose a person falls seriously ill. Doctors try their medical skill to save him. But prayers are also offered. When the person is very important a whole community or a whole nation may offer prayers for his recovery. In the year 1940 Hitler threatened to attack England. The British set up remarkable defences and made use of all their military genius to meet the danger but days were also set apart for national prayer for victory. And in the holy city of Benares, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the

grand old Hindu, organised a big 'Yajna' for peace in the world. At the back of this effort is the conviction that there is a Power higher than man which can be influenced through prayer and supplication to remove evil from the world. So long as there is evil, suffering and insecurity in life, mental processes which we have put under the name of religion must arise. For religion to go, the world and man must become perfect.

Here is a verse from the "Bhagawata Purana" which puts the psychology of religion in a nutshell:—

"O Father of Universe! may there be calamities for us always and at every step whereby we shall have that sight of You which saves us from experiencing another birth."

GOD

Two questions arise here. Does the object of religion exist? Does religion achieve what it is expected to achieve? In other words, is there God? And are prayers really answered? The first question is outside the scope of psychological enquiry. It is for the metaphysician to decide whether God exists or not. For us the conviction that He exists is enough. We assume that He exists and we find that man tries to enter into a personal relation with Him. He

has no form. The human mind gives Him a form. It may, at first, give Him many forms. Thus for every insecurity of life a god may be set up. But as human intellect expands, as the meaning of natural forces is more and more understood and the mind on the whole is more and more integrated, the number of gods is reduced until we reach the conception of one, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God. But even the One is worshipped in various forms and with various attitudes.

The form of God we get from the social group in which we are born and brought up. The central idea about God in Christianity is His Fatherhood. He is conceived after the pattern of a Father, loving, protecting, caring and helping us to grow to moral maturity. Those born among Christians will approach God as a child approaches his father.

Islam has four chief attributes of God : Rabb (Lord), Rahman (Beneficent), Rahim (Merciful) and Malik (Master who judges and forgives). Persons born and brought up among Musalmans will worship God as the Master of the Universe who watches over all, judges everything and, if He likes, forgives human faults. His mercy is as infinite and absolute as His power. In regard to God Islam inspires his followers with

a sense of sublimity, fear and humility.

Hinduism is an assemblage of all shades of religion and contains all conceptions of God human nature is capable of framing.

Besides the social *milieu*, one's own peculiar nature may determine the form of God. There are persons found all over the world who are highly emotional and extremely affectionate. When this world does not meet their emotional demands they fall back upon God and make Him an object of love. In Islam they are called Sufis and in Hinduism Bhakats. They enter into an emotional relation with God and their worship is very personal and emotional, ranging from the tenderness of friendship to the madness of sex-love. They love God as King, Father, Mother, Friend, Teacher, Spouse and Lover.

Jalalud-Din Rumi describes the Divine Union thus :—

Mustafa became beside himself at that sweet call, His prayer failed on "the night of the early morning halt."

He lifted not head from that blissful sleep.

So that his morning prayer was put off till noon.

On that, his wedding night, in the presence of his bride,

His pure soul attained to kiss her hands.

Love and mistress are both veiled and hidden.

Impute it not a fault if I call Him 'Bride.'

The following extracts from Kabir's poems show the trend of the mystic mind * :—

A sore pain troubles me day and night,
and I cannot sleep; I long for the meeting
with my Beloved, and my father's house
gives me pleasure no more.

My Lord brings to me words of sorrow
and words of joy, and He Himself heals
their strife.

I will offer my body and mind to my
Lord: I will give up my life, but never can I
forget my Lord.

Kabir says: 'Listen to me, my friend: My
beloved Lord is within.

When I am parted from my Beloved
my heart is full of misery. I have no com-
fort in the day, I have no sleep in the night.
To whom shall I tell my sorrow?

Oh my heart! the Supreme Spirit, the
Great Master, is near you: Wake, Oh wake.

Run to the feet of your Beloved: for
your Lord stands near to your head.

You have slept for unnumbered ages; this
morning will you not wake?

* *One Hundred Poems of Kabir* : Rabindra Nath Tagore.

The mystic has different moods. Forms of God change with his moods, though remaining love-forms all the time.

From the above discussion it can be easily concluded that man conceives God in accordance with his mental make-up which is the result of his inherited nature and the social influences under which he has grown. Kabir has well said : " That formless God takes a thousand forms in the eyes of His creatures." There is a verse in the Bhagavad Gita which sums up the position in a remarkable way :—

"Howsoever men approach me, even so do I accept them." (IV : 11).

In short, the thirst for God arises from a human need and the nature of God is determined by the nature of man in a particular social setting. Whether God really exists or not, is a different question. An overwhelming majority of the human race needs Him and accepts His existence.

There are some persons who love to reason about things. They reason about God's existence also. Among these there are some whose judgment on this point remains suspended. They are called agnostics. Others allow their heads to overpower the stirrings of their hearts and became atheists ; for reason so far has not

been able to prove the existence of the God of religions.

About them an Islamic Hadīth says : " People will not cease scrutinizing, till they shall say, Here is Allah, the Creator of all things, but who has created Him ? " Even as far back as the Rig Veda there were persons who belonged to this reasoning type. In the Nāsadiya Hymn it is said,

Who then knows, who has declared it
here from whence was born this creation?
The gods came later than this creation;
who then knows whence it arose?

He from whom this creation arose,

Whether he made it or did not make it,
the Highest Seer in the Highest Heaven, he
forsooth knows, or *does even he not know ?* *

The reasoning type can be divided into four main groups. The first group, as we have already said, become agnostics. The second group deny the existence of God and are called atheists. The third group accept the Absolute of Philosophy but deny the God of Religion. The last group allow both the Absolute and God to stay in their minds. They do not face the contradiction.

* Italics ours.

Sankaracharya, the greatest and the purest Absolutist the world has ever produced, having established the existence of Brahm, felt that the common man needed a God and set up one and made Him a part of Maya. He called this "lower knowledge" as compared with the higher knowledge of Brahm. His hymns to Hari, Siva and other gods make an interesting reading. Here are typical examples:

"I praise, with devotion, the All-pervading (Vishnu) who, Himself without origin, is the origin of the universe, in whom this wheel of samsara (phenomenal existence) revolves in this wise, and, on realizing whom the wheel of samsara is destroyed—that Hari, the destroyer of the darkness of samsara I praise."

"This is the time to give; I am deserving of your gift, you are a donor; I beg not any beside you; and give me firm devotion to you alone, O Siva of compassionate nature! with that I am satisfied."

"I am poor, unfortunate, broken, grief-stricken, done up, torn asunder. O Siva, you are the inner soul within living beings and yet do not know my suffering: O Lord, do protect me."

Sankara, true to his thesis of the attributeless Brahm, could not have composed these hymns. That he did so shows the

triumph of the heart over the head. Mystics like Kabir and Nanak accept both the Absolute and God and in their sayings move from the one to the other without the least difficulty.

Sri Rama Krishna of Bengal in one of his talks tries to combine the two conceptions. He says: "God with form and God without form are not two different Beings. He who is with form is also without form. To a devotee God manifests Himself in various forms. Just think of a shoreless ocean—an infinite expanse of water—no land visible in any direction, only here and there are visible blocks of ice formed by intense cold. Similarly, under the cooling influences, so to say, of the deep devotion of His worshipper, the Infinite reduces Himself into the Finite and appears before him as a Being with form. Again, as on the appearance of the sun, the ice melts away, so on the appearance of the sun of knowledge God with form melts away into the formless."

The last portion is significant. It means that God with form and attributes is not the Truth and that the idea of it is founded on lack of true knowledge. When true knowledge appears God disappears. So long as knowledge about Reality does not arise God with form remains. The worshipper feels that the form comes from

God, the psychologist tells him that it is the creation of his own mind.

The conception of the attributeless Absolute is difficult to be entertained by ordinary minds, to say nothing of its realization. That is why the ancients called it esoteric knowledge, reserved only for the elect. To give up the loving, protecting and merciful Deity in favour of the formless and attributeless Absolute requires intellect of a very high order and self-confidence of an extraordinary degree.

‘Among thousands of men scarcely one strives for perfection, and of those who strive and succeed scarcely one knows me in truth’ (as the formless Absolute). (Bhagavad Gita VII: 3.)

Again,

‘The difficulty of those whose minds are set on the Unmanifested is greater, for the goal of the Unmanifested is hard for the embodied to reach.’ (Bhagavad Gita XII : 5.)

Leaving aside the small number of the reasoning type, for mankind in general the idea of God is a great aid in fighting the sorrows of life and cannot be discarded. In an imperfect world the perfect God will remain because He is needed.

PRAYER

The second question, we asked above, was: Are prayers really answered? Tennyson said:

'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.' Is the claim justified?

Prayer has various aims. It may relate to my own body or mind over which I can exercise some control. Thus I may pray for good health or for the removal of my sins and defects. It may relate to other bodies and minds *en rapport* with me. I may pray for the health or the moral elevation of another person devoted to me. It may relate to things outside my control, such as drought and epidemics. We pray to effect changes in all the three classes of objects when we feel helpless and wish that some superhuman power should intervene. With respect to the last class sometimes things happen according as we pray; sometimes they do not. The wonder of wonders is that even when they do not happen in accordance with our prayers we are not very much disheartened and our belief in God becomes none the less weak. So useful is this belief that we immediately heal the breach by saying that God's will is greater than ours and His ways are past finding out. So did Christ when he was about to fall into the hands of his enemies and his end was near. "And he was withdrawn from them (disciples) about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father! if thou be willing, remove this

cup from me ; *nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.*" * (Luke 22 : 41-42.)

The faith that all things are possible for God coupled with the idea that He has His own will and plans, sustains the human heart.

Prayer connected with our own body and mind can, however, be effective, if it is backed by complete faith. What is faith ? It is best described by Christ himself :

'Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.' (Mark II : 24.)

If I am unhealthy and I pray for health and intensely feel that I am getting healthy, I shall certainly become healthy. Prayer, here, becomes auto-suggestion and auto-suggestion in recent times has proved its efficacy. In most cases prayer may prove more effective than mere auto-suggestion. The idea that a superhuman power is effecting changes in me is more powerful than that my own mind is doing so. The first idea has far more prestige and in all suggestion prestige matters. In the same manner if I become conscious of my sins and pray to God to make me sinless and intensely feel that I am becoming sinless, there is a strong probability that

* Italics ours.

I shall turn over a new leaf. But prayer or suggestion has its own limitations. I cannot produce any and every change in me. If at the age of 30 I am 5' 6", however hard I may pray to acquire a foot more, there is no likelihood of my stature being increased to that extent. If my intelligence quotient is 70 I cannot make it 120 through any amount of prayer or suggestion. The power of prayer is limited by the nature of the original stuff of which I am made. I can also pray for another person and if he has faith as explained above there is a likelihood of the prayer being answered. For the person himself feels that he is getting better and better. Here again, auto-suggestion works. Moreover, prayer said in a quiet place, with the body completely relaxed, soothes the nerves. So much the psychologist is able to concede to prayer.

The belief that there is a superhuman Power who is able to do what no human being can do and who through supplication and devotion can be influenced in our favour, is religion. We have shown above that humanity has not outgrown the need for religion. When knowledge about the forces of Nature becomes complete, when relations among men become perfectly harmonious, when the health of the body and mind is secured religion may go. Out of

two societies the one whose knowledge of scientific laws is greater, whose members suffer less from physical and mental ailments, enjoy more amenities of life and have greater harmony among themselves, will be less religious than the other whose members suffer more from the above evils.

Such a useful aid to man can also become harmful. Connected as it is with human helplessness it may become a substitute for the effort to conquer that helplessness. When this happens religion needs to be treated like a disease. It is a disease that seriously affects the social and political progress of a country. India, at present, is an egregious example of religious morbidity. It is difficult to make the masses conscious of the evils they are subject to, still more difficult to stir them to action against them. It is a vicious circle. The more their helplessness increases the more they seek refuge in fatalism and religion; the more religious and fatalistic they become the less fit they are to fight the handicaps of life. Religion, meant to be a source of confidence and strength, is a dope for them and makes them insensitive to the working of natural laws.

: Suppose an epidemic like plague infects a town. If the people of the town have a scienti-

fic attitude towards life they will discover the causes of plague and try to destroy them, so that plague will probably never visit that town again. But if they are merely religion-intoxicated they will only say long prayers and never care to make use of the laws of health. This is actually what we find in our country. Municipal administrators know too well how difficult it is to induce people to take interest in the scientific way of living. People are so overcome with lethargy that they wish that some superhuman Power should appear and remove their suffering. Religion, if it electrifies human effort to combat the forces of evil and darkness, in no way detracts from mental health. But religion which takes the place of effort is a neurosis.

Masses of India are in the grip of this neurosis. Its causes are many. Islam and the Bhakti cult place too much emphasis on dependence on God. Though there are passages in the Quran which speak to the contrary, yet they seem to have never been emphasized by its teachers. "Certainly We have created men to face difficulty" (90:4). "And that Man shall have nothing but what he strives for; and that his striving shall soon be seen; then shall he be rewarded for it with the fullest reward" (53:39-41). "O My people! work in your place, I

am a worker " (39:39).

The more important causes, however, are a lack of scientific knowledge and increasing economic and political insecurities. These causes can be removed by a scientific mass education which will recondition the whole personality, and a sound reorganisation of the State and the economic system. Unless this is done the people of this country will never be able to find their feet.

We have very briefly explained the psychology of religion. Our thesis is that the roots of religion lie in human helplessness and the instinct of appeal. It may be objected that this does not cover all the causes which produce the phenomenon of religion. It may be said that the quest of God may be due to the instinct of curiosity. We wish to assert that where curiosity is at work we get metaphysics, not religion. The God of metaphysics is not the God of religion. Generally, He cannot become the object of worship that may draw out the whole personality of the devotee. Our thesis will be easily accepted if the philosopher is not confused with the devotee.

CHURCH

Religion, as we have said above, is a private and personal matter. As such it should be

distinguished from Church which is a social organisation. There is nothing in religion which may create bad blood among men. Religion can never be the cause of factions. What has been the cause of trouble is churchism.

A church has two main elements, creed and ritual. A church is always associated with a personality. Beliefs of that personality are, in the main, the creed of the church, his practices its ritual. In the course of time lesser but important personalities may augment the two elements, lessen them or modify them. They become the founders of sub-churches within the main church.

Let us apply this analysis to a few of the great churches. To begin with Christianity. "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." (Mark, 12:30.) This is religion; the rest is church or ethics. The various beliefs and sayings and actions of Christ were taken over by his disciples and with enthusiasm passed on to others. In this way the Christian Church was founded. The passage of time created Catholics and Protestants and various other sub-churches. They owed their origin to the bias of forceful personalities.

Islam emphasizes the unity of God. Its great

principles are : *La Ilāha Ill-Allāh*, i.e., "there is no God but Allāh, or, nothing deserves to be made an object of love and worship except Allāh"; and *Rabb al-ālemīn*, i.e., He is the God of the whole world. The greatest contribution of the Prophet to religion was that he laid stress on a direct approach to God, eliminating the priest altogether. He brought God nearer to man than 'his life-vein.' Complete submission to God is the essence of the religion of Islam.

The church of Islam is built on five pillars. The first is Prayer in particular postures, the second Zakat or poor-rate, the third the fast of Ramazān, the fourth Pilgrimage, the fifth Jihād or holy war. These pillars were erected by the Prophet himself. The last one, Jihad, arose out of a necessity of the Prophet's life. He had enemies all round and he was forced to take up arms. The followers of the Prophet made a tradition of it and the church of Islam became militant through a sheer accident. In fact, Jihād should not be regarded as an essential tenet of Islam.

In the course of time sub-churches came into existence, Shia, Sunni and Wahabi sects, to name only a few. They were the creation of the individual bias of strong personalities.

As regards Hindu churches their number is

legion. During the last two thousand years strong personalities who could draw others appeared in various parts of the country and talked of the ways and means to get release from the bondage of "samsara" or the phenomenal world. Either they themselves founded definite groups or their followers organised themselves into sects. Thus a very large number of churches came into existence. At present there is the danger of a new church coming into being, "The Gandhi Church." Mahatma Gandhi has definite beliefs regarding God and more definite methods of living *in rapport* with Him. There are people who are trying to live like him. Mr. D. S. Sarma, the Principal of a Madras college, has reduced his teachings to Sanskrit sutras. The book represents Gandhi creed at its best. Add to it the Mahatma's ways of living which are in themselves a regular ritual and you have a full-fledged church. Sabramati, Sewagram and other places of his sojourn have every likelihood of becoming places of pilgrimage.

Religion springs from the needs of the human heart. It is something spontaneous and natural. It is one's own concern with God. It neither adds to nor subtracts from the comfort of another. Churches, on the other hand, are founded on the bias of certain persons. They live by

asserting their superiority individually. Thus they become a big source of discord among men. They kill their followers' independence and not a few of them reduce them to mere machines. A truly religious man has a universal character but when he joins a church he loses that character, particularises himself and sets himself up against another. That is why mystics, who live in intimate relation with God, have generally regarded churches with suspicion. Thus the great Persian mystic Abu Said ibn Abil Khayr says:

'Not until every mosque beneath the sun
Lies ruined, will our holy work be done ;
And never will true Musalman appear,
Till faith and infidelity are one.' *

Says Kabir :

'O servant, where dost thou seek me ?
Lo ! I am beside thee.
I am neither in temple nor in mosque ;
I am neither in Ka'aba nor in Kailash ;
Neither am I in rites and ceremonies,
Nor in Yoga and renunciation.'

'If thou art a true seeker, thou shalt at
once see Me ! thou shalt meet Me in a
moment of time.'

* Quoted by O'Leary in *Islam at the Cross Roads*.

Kabir says, 'O Sadhu : God is the breath of all breath.'

Those who have the vision of a new world order are trying to discover universal characters of man. Unless the thick crust of particularisations, which does not allow us to see ourselves in others, is scraped off there can be no harmony in this world. If all churches disappear neither God nor man will suffer. The relation between man and God is natural and does not hang on a church. This sentiment is beautifully expressed by Hocking in *Living Religions and a World Faith*: "God is in this world, but Buddha, Jesus, Mohammad are in their little private closets and we shall thank them, but never return to them. Such is the spirit of world citizenship at this moment." "God's centre," said a modern Indian saint, "is everywhere, His circumference nowhere."

It may be argued that ordinary people cannot do without a church. The founder of a church satisfies one of the fundamental instincts of man, the instinct of self-submission. This satisfaction goes under the name of hero-worship. The masses, so long as they do not attain to a very high degree of intellectual advancement and emotional maturity, must link their self-submission to some hero. True. But the

founders of churches are not the only heroes. In this country we are so church-ridden that most of the energy belonging to the instinct of self-submission is absorbed by the heroes of churches. Life, in consequence, is cabined and confined. If this energy is detached from these objects and is reattached to the heroes of science, literature and art and builders of the nation, life would become rich.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND MORALITY

Religion should also be distinguished from social customs and morality. Keeping 'purdah' by women of a particular society is a social custom. So is polygamy or monogamy. Social customs have nothing to do with religion. While religion is an individual's private reaction to problems of life, social customs are stereotyped actions of a group, actions found useful by it according to its lights. Social customs change from time to time. They are relative to the changing needs of a society.

Morality should be kept separate from religion or more specially from churchism. Unless this is done it will never be able to stand on a sound foundation. So far it has been bound up with fear of law, public opinion and God. This has

been its weakness. For fear connected with these agencies can be and has been evaded through various clever devices. True morality consists in moral habits which work automatically. If a person is truly just and honest it is because he cannot help being so. Fear can be stifled and in consequence morality crippled. But habits, once properly formed, must operate effectively. If humanity is to become better morality must be freed from all sorts of fears and effort should be directed towards producing moral habits. Active education in home and school alone can produce these habits. We should also keep in mind the limitations of human nature. If we want these habits to stay unimpaired we should see that the insecurities of life are reduced to a minimum. For temptations to break the moral law are born of them. This can be done through the reorganisation of the State as envisaged above. In short, a well-planned education conducted in an environment that is founded on justice will make humanity morally healthy and not the fear of God, the police or the public.

It is well to keep the distinction between religion, church, morality and social customs clear in mind, if we wish to save ourselves from the worry that afflicts us because of confusing them. Suppose a people worship many gods. Then a

leader arises among them and directs their attention to one God. They accept him and begin to worship only one God. This is a change in religion. Suppose a people take off their shoes and stand upright when praying to God. Then the younger members of the group assert that they will not take off their shoes when praying and instead of standing will sit on chairs. This is a demand for a change in church. Suppose a reformer appears among thugs and tells them that thuggee is bad and strangling strangers on the road a sin. At his advice they give up thuggee. This is a change in morality. Suppose a certain community keep their women in strict purdah. At a certain period in the life of that community its women seek emancipation and discard purdah. This is a change in a mere social convention.

If India is to make progress, churches should be thrown into the background and religion should not be mixed up with moral precepts and social customs.

WEEPING WOMEN

WEEPING WOMEN

HINDU WOMEN

‘If God had meant woman to rule over man,’ says St. Augustine, ‘He would have taken her out of Adam’s head. Had He destined her to be his slave.....from his feet. But God took the woman out of the man’s side, for He made her to be an helpmate and an equal to him.’ This truth dawned upon men in the West very slowly. It has not yet been appreciated by men in India. Women of India suffer as they suffered centuries ago. Poets in their imagination may have taken them to Heaven, but who cares for poets and their passing moods? Men keep them in chains and saints regard any association with them as a sure way to hell.

In the West a woman is the fair sex; in our country she is the other sex. In the land of ‘Malechhas’ she is the better half; in the land of ‘gods’ she is the weaker half, so much cotton-wooled that her soul is completely smothered. Across the seas they call a dog a bad name and hang him. Here we call a woman a goddess

and strangle her. The clever Hindu mind has so sanctified the chains with which she has been bound that she loves their clang and bears their burden as a religious duty.

A girl starts her life with a great sense of inferiority. She finds that the lamp of life burns dimly in a home without a son. She may be a paragon of beauty, charm and loveliness, but she does not impart that glow to her parents' faces which a son does. This is due to certain reasons. In the first place, parents feel that she is not a permanent member of the family ; that one day she must go to another. In the second place, man is the bread-winner and the one who has to continue the family. In the third place, and this is peculiar to Hindus, a man will be denied a place in Heaven unless he has a male descendant to make him offerings after his death. This is a special reason why an orthodox Hindu desires a son. If he fails to have a male issue he adopts one, however clever his daughters may be. The rich want boys to inherit their property, for girls in Hindu Society until very lately had no claim on their fathers' property. For these reasons the birth of a girl is not a happy event.

Hindus are governed by their stars. Immediately after the birth of children their horo-

scopes are prepared but in most cases girls' horoscopes are not made. Reason. At the time of marriage the horoscope of the girl and her prospective husband will have to be matched and if they do not agree a serious difficulty will be created. A more feasible plan is adopted. Only the boy's horoscope is consulted. If it promises a good future the girl is 'given away.' If horoscopes are to be believed, the temperaments and dispositions, to say nothing of prospects in general, of the two should be matched. That it is not done so, shows that the girl's personality is of no account.

The marriage of a girl is a 'dana' or a gift. 'Kanya dana' or the gift of a daughter is regarded as an act of great merit. Very often a couple without a daughter will pay the whole cost of the dowry at the marriage of another's daughter to be able to make the gift.

In law codes eight forms of marriage are mentioned. Daiva, when a girl is married to a priest; Arsha, when the father of the girl gets a cow and a bull from the bridegroom, though not as a price; Prajapatya, when the father gives away the girl with the injunction: 'May both of you perform together your dharma'; Asura, when the bridegroom buys the girl; Gandharva, when love alone is the deciding factor; Rakshasa,

when the girl is abducted or captured by force ; Paisacha, when the girl is carried away through nefarious means ; and Brahm, when the bridegroom is duly selected by the father without the consent of the girl. Out of these eight forms the Brahm form has been popular all over India and it is highly extolled by the law-givers. The Gandharva form in which mutual attraction and love is the foundation of marriage is only mentioned. It does not get support from anywhere except a few writers on sex like Vatsayana. The Brahm form has been the accepted form, the form in which parents' idiosyncrasies determine the nature of the marriage bond.

The girl is bred to be given away to a man, to be yoked to his life-chariot with no will of her own. She is completely at the mercy of her lord. She has no independent rights of her own. The man is asked to provide her with food, clothes, shelter and other comforts. But whether he does it or not she must follow him like a shadow and think of no other. This is called "Pativrata Dharma," the ideal which is burnt into the mind of the Hindu girl. : Blind, lame, debauch or drunkard, the man is given all the cards in his hand to play the game of life ; and for the blind obedience she offers the woman is dubbed 'goddess.' The goddess

has no rights exclusively her own. Until lately she was scrupulously prevented from developing her personality. Education alone draws out personality but that was denied her. She has to serve her Pati-deva (Husband-god) and that she must do without any complaint. She must cook, bear children, nurse her lord when he is ill, press his legs when he is tired and fan him to sleep when the weather is hot. This is a typical picture of an ideal Hindu woman. One cannot help admiring her courage, fortitude and endurance. She is taught that through this path alone lies her salvation. Moksha or personal salvation is the *summum bonum* for a Hindu, man or woman. But a woman, they say, cannot get salvation unless she is born a man in her next life. Our next birth is determined by the mental impressions and merits of good deeds of this life. If in this life a woman completely concentrates her mind on her man she will be born a man in her next life ; for a person becomes what his or her mind feeds upon. This is a very ingenious psychology to keep women in permanent bondage. We can, however, question the very basis of the argument. Why can't a woman get salvation as woman? There is nothing in her nature to prevent her from realising the prescribed ideal. Or we may go a step

further and give up the selfish ideal of Moksha altogether. Suppose Hindu women say: "We do not want Moksha. We want to be born again and again to make this world better and better." The whole of the argument falls to pieces and the evil psychology mentioned above loses all force. Divested of all religious wrappings the tyranny of man becomes naked. He has, all these centuries, conspired against woman and through various clever designs kept her ignorant of her capacities and abilities.

A woman, according to the orthodox Hindu view, is meant only for procreation. She is the 'field' in which man plants the seed. Once this view is accepted a woman becomes only a child-bearing machine, and she has virtually been made to behave like a machine under the full control of man. She is his property; he possesses her. His business is to keep her in order, hers to move according to his wishes. He commands; she obeys. The relation between the two has been well expressed by Shakespeare:

'Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
And for thy maintenance, commits his body
To painful labour, both by sea and land,
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;
And craves no other tribute at thy hands;

But love, fair looks, and true obedience,
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
Even such a woman owes to her husband.*

To keep women completely in their possession men have done two things. They have made them economically dependent on them and have not given them educational and other facilities through which they are likely to discover their personalities. This dependence is turned into a religious duty by Hindus under the title of Pativrata Dharma. Pativrata Dharma is extolled to a limit. It is the means of Moksha ; it secures a woman a place in Heaven. It produces extraordinary powers in her. A truly pativrata woman can shake heaven and earth. Like Savitri of old she can bring her dead husband back to life. If her husband dies before her, her life loses all purpose. She must either offer herself to the flames that consume his body or be lost in God. If she marries again her Pativrata Dharma is damaged, for according to the Dharma only one man should occupy her mind ; there is no room for another. This was the reason why the custom of " Satti " came into existence ; also why widows were not allowed to remarry or they themselves

* *The Taming of The Shrew.*

accepted not to enter into new matrimonial alliances.

The whole conception of Pativrata Dharma is a clever device to keep women under subjection. It has worked remarkably well. Under it Hindu women have become ideal wives which means wives without souls. It is said that nowhere else in the world wives are so devoted to their husbands as in India. It is forgotten that they cannot help being so. With them it is not a virtue but a necessity. They are forced to marry and having married they find that their boats are already burnt. Religiously, economically and morally they are tied to their men. Ideal wives! Marvellous women, who have paid so great a price for food, clothes and shelter.

Hindu women, mostly, remain contented and satisfied with their lot. Now and then, however, their dissatisfaction becomes manifest through certain forms of behaviour. We may take some of the extraneous ceremonies connected with the main marriage ceremony. The wedding takes place at the bride's house. When the bridegroom arrives he is received with welcome songs and a shower of reeds, though worked over with flowers. This is symbolic of beating. Modern psychological research has amply shown that all wit, humour, fun and joking

symbolise some unconscious motive. The uneasiness which the bridegroom is made to feel in an atmosphere of great fun and jollity is not without meaning. It is significant that women and not men in the bride's house make fun of the bridegroom. When he is going through the marriage ceremony jingling little boxes land on his back. The end of his coat is sewn to his seat. The shoes which he puts off before entering the sacred room disappear. At certain places he is taken to an inner room where the family goddess is supposed to be resting, under cover, in a corner. He is asked to offer obeisance to the goddess. When out of courtesy he does so, the cover is immediately removed and lo! what meets his eyes is a pair of the bride's shoes. A bevy of girls clap their hands with a feeling of triumph. At certain other places the skirt of the bride is passed round the neck of the bridegroom. Sometimes regular fights have taken place over this rite when the bridegroom has resisted. This is not mere fun. Its manifest content may be mere fun for those girls, but its latent content or unconscious motive is to subdue and punish the person at whose mercy their sister or friend is going to pass her life. Take again the scene created by the women when the bride is about to depart in a palanquin

for her new home. Their eyes become red with tears. Their wails and songs have so much pathos that even the most hard-hearted men give way; and not a few bridegrooms have melted:

O father : you hold the palanquin,
What claim have you now on your daughter ;
His is the claim, the father-in-law's.
O Uncle : you hold the palanquin.

What claim have you now on your niece ? ”
This is the strain.

The parting is exceedingly heart-rending. The father of the bride stands before the father of the bridegroom and with folded hands addresses him thus, ‘ Sir, this poor soul is offering you his daughter. She will be ever devoted to your feet.’ And the addressee replies, ‘ She is now a part of our own family. She is our daughter, She will have every comfort.’ The whole of the behaviour of the bride’s household throws ample light on the treatment which their daughter is expected to have from her husband and his people. They have no idea as to how she is going to fare. It is not a question of how *she will like* the new company, for she has no choice in the matter. It is rather a question of how *she will be liked* by her new custodians. Their’s the will, their’s the taste, she has to ad-

just herself to. If she fails to win their hearts her life is ruined. She cannot claim a divorce; she has no property to live on and she was never educated for a profession. Her parents can take her back; but few parents can afford to do so. The only course left for her is to accept the inevitable and live inasmuch servility as is imposed on her. Some day she hopes to win back her people through sheer sacrifice and service. A Hindu parent regards himself as most fortunate if his daughter is happy after marriage.

Hindu marriage is not a contract; it is a sacrament. But it seems to be a sacrament for women, and not for men. Law-givers, all men, gave all the rights to their own sex. They insisted on the faithfulness of women and made a religion of it. Men's faithfulness was only mentioned. It was never offered the dignity of a religion. It is true that public opinion has always been against more than one conjugal alliance; but the feeling that law allows it is enough to loosen the brakes on the egotism of men. The major threat with which men have intimidated their wives is that of another marriage. When a wife dies new marriage proposals go with the funeral procession. If by chance a young man is anguish-smitten and resists the idea of another marriage, he is reprimanded. 'Fool!' they say, 'you are

only changing a pair of shoes.' And if he is young, it is seldom that he does not agree to that change. If a rich Hindu does not have a male issue and is loathe to adopt one, he takes another wife in the hope of getting a son by her. Even though the first wife gives her consent in the matter, the consent is meaningless because she knows that her resistance will be futile. In her heart of hearts no woman can allow that liberty to her husband. All this proves that a Hindu marital relation is just mechanical. It is not founded on love. The wife is called the 'half,' but in actual practice she is only an appendage that may be discarded any moment without damaging the main body. A pathetic example of flimsy marital relations is afforded by a new phenomenon that has lately made its appearance. Most girls who have had university education cannot find husbands in tune with their personality, development and economic ambitions. On the other hand, a number of middle-aged or even young men who were married before educated girls had made their appearance in public feel much attracted towards them. Some of them, having lovely and worthy wives and a couple of children to their credit, have entered into matrimonial alliances with these smart products of our universities. Public opinion may stamp this

action as a piece of villainy; decent morality may regard it as the betrayal of a sacred trust; but because Manu and his wise companions sanction such an unabashed butchery of innocent souls the devil takes his chance. Under such a dispensation if women say that it is a curse to be born a woman, they are justified.

Women have never been in the good books of the wise of this country. Among the things Buddha denounced women were included. 'O disciples, there are three to whom secrecy belongs and not openness.....to women, to priestly wisdom and false doctrine.'

When Anand asked the Master how one should conduct oneself towards women, he answered;

'Don't see them, Anand.'

'But if we see them, what should we do?'

'Don't speak to them, Anand.'

'But if they speak to us, O Master, what shall we do?'

'Keep wide-awake, Anand.'

In the Bhagavad Gita women are classed with Vaisyas and Sudras, unholy classes who were not allowed to read the Vedas. Krishna says that *even they* can have Moksha if they immerse themselves in devotion to Him.

"For those who take refuge in Me, O Arjuna,

though they are of the womb of sin—women, Vaisyas and Sudras—even they attain to the highest state.”

—(*Bhagavad Gita*, IX:32.)

Manu reduces their status still further.

‘At a ferry an empty cart shall be made to pay one pana, a man’s load half a pana, and an animal and a woman one quarter of a pana, an unloaded man one-half of a quarter.’

‘When creating them Brahma allotted to women a love of their bed, of their seat and of ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice and bad conduct.’

‘Women having no strength and no knowledge of the Vedic text are as impure as falsehood, that is the fixed rule.’

Neither practice nor theory give women any status in Hindu Society. Rama is regarded as an incarnation of God, who came with the purpose of establishing moral standards. The story of Rama copiously illustrates how moral precepts have to be lived. But the treatment accorded to Sita, the greatest woman of India, by Rama draws tears to our eyes. The wife, who was the symbol of sacrifice and devotion, could be discarded and for a trifling reason. It is said that one night Rama was walking incognito through his capital city when he heard

a *dhobi* and his wife quarrelling lustily. The *dhobi* was saying: 'I am not Rama that I should take you back after you have lived in another man's house.' This remark sent a chill down Rama's spine. A king was being slandered because of his wife. The wife must go. And Sita was dispatched to a dark forest. Thank God, a sage living in that forest took her under protection.

This episode in the Ramayana is generally quoted as an example of a Hindu king's concern for the opinion of his subjects, however low in status they may be. Fetish! No reasonable person can afford to show concern for any opinion expressed by any person. It is forgotten that the *dhobi's* remark was false. Sita had passed through the ordeal of fire and her purity had been proved. And if Rama had descended on this earth to set up standards of right conduct he ought to have punished the *dhobi*. But instead of doing so he cast away his wife, and that too at a delicate period when she was with child. Surely a woman who was the incarnation of purity and nobility was regarded as far less important than a *dhobi*.

In the Mahabharata women fared no better. Yudhishtira, the son of Dharma, played a game of dice with Dussasana. One by one he lost

everything he had. One thing remained—his wife, Darupdi. At last he staked her also and lost the stake. What followed, though exceedingly pathetic, does not concern us here. What we want to show is that a wife in those days was just an article of property. In the centuries that followed her position did not improve at all. Rather it became more difficult.

A strong attack came from the ideal of personal salvation or Nirvana or Moksha. The Upanishadas started the process. Buddha glorified it and Sankara, Ramanuja and others made it so popular that earthly life came to a standstill in this country. Almost all Hindu churches, whatever their nature, agree with regard to the ideal of Moksha. They also agree in the main items of moral and physical discipline through which the ideal is attained. The core of that discipline is Brahmacharya which means sex-control in thought, word and deed, which implies a complete boycott of women mentally, if not altogether physically. The merit supposed to accrue from Brahmacharya is extolled to the skies. It generates superhuman powers and makes the mind free from all disturbances. Such a mind enables a person to enter into final 'contemplation.' It was due to Brahmacharya that Hunumana was

able to carry a hill over a long distance ; and it was again through the powers of Brahmacharya that Bhishama delayed his death by six months. It is never stressed that Rama, the superman, was married ; that the Pandava brothers and many Kurus who displayed marvellous feats of strength and skill were also married.

Sex indulgence is a great bogey. A drop of the vital fluid once spilled can never be replaced. Not the sex act alone but even sex fantasies and dreams destroy Brahmacharya. The only way to practise Brahmacharya is to avoid all contact with the opposite sex. In consequence, women become disgusting and objects of deep hatred. They must be avoided. Their seductions are irresistible. Under their influence even 'rishis' after years of austere penance fell and gods lost their seats. In this connection is narrated the story of a great sage, living a life of meditation, all by himself, in a forest. One evening, sitting in his hut, he heard the wail of a woman outside. Moved by it he came out. It was all dark. The sky was overcast with thick clouds. Intermittent flashes of lightening revealed the figure of a young woman of exquisite beauty. She was crying. The sage went up to her and accosted her thus : ' O goddess, what ails thee ? ' She said, ' I am caught

in the storm. I have lost my way and the night is ahead of me. I want shelter.' The rishi offered her one of his outhouses. She gratefully accepted the offer, went in and bolted the door from inside. After a few hours when the night had advanced Cupid raised his head and suddenly the figure of the young woman sprang up in the mind of the sage. He wanted to banish it and put up an intense struggle to do so. But all in vain. He found himself in the grip of passion which became so overwhelming that he went out and knocked at the door of the sleeping beauty. There was no response from within. Evidently the young lady was fast asleep. The rishi, disappointed and disgusted, came back to his cottage, saying, that he would have nothing to do with her; he must go to sleep. Did sleep ever conquer passion? Another hour and he was up again, marching towards the abode of the nymph. A few knocks. No answer. The rishi climbed the roof, broke it open and let himself in.

Such is the power of sex. O young and old, beware of it. If you wish to maintain your Brahmacharya keep away from women altogether. Do not even occupy the seat they have been sitting on. "Sit not alone with your mother, mother-in-law or daughter. The force of pas-

sions leads even the wise astray." It was never realised by these preachers that the rishi lost control over himself because he had all his life lived away from women and had no ideal of chivalry. Thus to the conception that woman was man's property, was added the conception that she was evil.

This account might lead the reader to think that Hindu homes are dark, drab and sorrowful. Just the opposite. The organisation we have described does not give women any status. They have no right, neither political nor social. Their life is that of dependence, first on parents, then on husbands and lastly on sons. It is spent inside the home. Their ambitions do not go beyond the loaf and the baby. Their ideal is service. From this it should not be concluded that they are unhappy. In the matter of domestic happiness no other country can take the shine out of Hindu homes. This is a point which should be properly studied and appreciated. In the first place, Hindu women, having no intellectual equipment and consequently completely ignorant of their abilities, accept the conditions dictated to them with religious fervour, and have always displayed an infinite capacity for service and devotion. This trait alone disarms even the haughtiest of men.

On the other hand, men have no right of divorce and public opinion in favour of monogamy has been more strict than any law could be. Kings alone have been allowed plurality of wives without comment. The ideal of Brahmacharya, it is taught, can be lived even after marriage, provided one has one wife only, does not go out of wedlock and exercises sufficient control over one's passions. All these factors aided by the gentleness and kind-heartedness of Hindus have made adjustments between husbands and wives possible. But it must be noted that these adjustments are not founded on the spontaneity of love and are mostly forced and mechanical.

MUSLIM WOMEN

What about Muslim women? There is so much perverted observation and wrong thinking regarding this matter. We have to see both what Law allows them and what practice gives them. The Muslim Law is mainly derived from the Holy Quran. It is glibly said that the Prophet sanctioned polygamy and that he himself had a number of wives. And polygamy, they say, is the greatest degradation to which women could be subjected. For such treatment offered to

women Islam stands condemned.

This criticism ignores certain sociological laws and is extremely superficial. No reformer has ever completely outgrown the social matrix in which he was born and brought up. Muhammad was an Arab. Among the Arabs of those days polygamy and concubinage were rife with a vengeance. Muhammad did not create these institutions. He found them among his people and made an attempt to restrict their use. Arabs could take any number of wives. Marriage was almost a mockery with them and women were literally chattels. Being a son of the soil he could not have stopped polygamy altogether. Moreover, no clever doctor completely denies his patient that which is habitual with him. After reading the Quran carefully one feels that Muhammad did not like polygamy. He seems to say: 'Have one wife and love her.' The Arab replies: 'No, it is impossible, I can never remain content with one.' The Prophet, then, says, 'You may marry two.' 'No, it is not enough.' 'Then have three.' 'Too few.' 'All right, have four, and no more.' 'But if you cannot deal equitably and justly with all, you shall marry only one.' This is a very ingenious way of preaching monogamy to a people licentious, polygamous and given to the gratification

of 'man's carnal lust.' It is a prescription for the morally sick, and those who follow the letter of it and not the spirit only show that they suffer from the same malady. 'It is earnestly to be hoped that, before long, a general synod of Muslim doctors will authoritatively declare that polygamy, like slavery, is abhorrent to the laws of Islam.'*

As regards Muhammad's own marriages they afford an interesting study. Muhammad's first marriage took place in the prime of his youth when he was twenty-five years of age. For twenty-six years he lived with Khadija, a very happy married life. He was monogamous till the age of fifty-one, when Khadija died. After that he contracted several marriages. Why did he do so? He could not have done it to satisfy lust. He had had a steady gratification of sex for twenty-six years. The age after fifty is a period of settlement rather than of the rise of the sex-urge. He was also the person who taught respect for women. He said, 'Paradise is at the feet of the mother.' The explanation given by Ameer Ali seems to be reasonably correct. Muhammad contracted so many marriages 'to provide helpless or widowed women with subsistence in the lack of all other means.

* Ameer Ali : *The Spirit of Islam*.

By taking them into his family, Muhammad provided for them *in the only way which the circumstances of the age and the people rendered possible.* *

In doing so he never meant to set up a standard for his followers in other countries.

Indian Musalmans are Indians first and Musalmans afterwards. The politically clever may not accept this statement; but it is based on psychological and sociological laws and they cannot be overruled. Because of the working of those laws Musalmans retained many Hindu traditions after having been converted to Islam. Monogamy was one of these traditions. The tradition coupled with economic circumstances did not allow polygamy to become popular among Muslims in India. The message of Muhammad fell on a soil far superior to that of Arabia. But the tradition may weaken and economic circumstances may become prosperous and the passage in the Quran may be interpreted literally and used as a sure sanction for the gratification of lust. This is the danger. However, as culture advances, women must feel that polygamy is an insult to them. The conception of self-respect is always relative to the times. Muhammad, by limiting the number

* Italics ours.

of wives, raised the self-respect of Arab women. If women of India demand the total abolition of polygamy, it only means that they have discovered themselves and that their opinion about themselves has become superior.

Unlike Hinduism the church of Muhammad allows divorce. But the freedom to divorce is not given in an equal measure to both sexes. 'Among the Arabs, the power of divorce possessed by the husband was unlimited. They recognised no rule of humanity or justice in the treatment of their wives.*' Muhammad did not favour the custom of divorce. There are definite verses in the Quran and the Hadith to this effect. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: 'Never did Allah allow anything more hateful to Him than divorce.' (A. D. 13 : 3). "They (your wives) are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them." (2:187) ".....They are the trust of Allah in your hands. So you must treat them with all kindness." (M. 15 : 19). 'And if you hate them (i.e. your wives), it may be that you dislike a thing while Allah has placed abundant good in it.' In the case of serious disputes Muhammad recommends arbitration. Only when arbitration fails should divorce be resorted

* Ameer Ali : *The Spirit of Islam*.

to : 'And if you fear a breach between the two, then appoint a judge from his people and a judge from her people ; if they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony between them ; surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.' (4 : 36). 'And if they separate, Allah will render them both free from want out of His ampleness, and Allah is Ample-giving, Wise.' (4 : 130).

Thus Muhammad taught that divorce was not desirable and that the right to divorce should be made use of as a last resort. Partly because of this teaching and partly because of the Hindu tradition divorce among Musalmans of India has not been regarded with favour. But Muhammad did not curtail the unlimited freedom of divorce which the Arab men of his day enjoyed and which Muslim husbands enjoy up to this day. 'While the husband has the right to dissolve the marriage tie whenever he desires, and for any trivial cause no such privilege is allowed to the wife.' * The husband can divorce his wife inside or outside the court, even without the knowledge of the wife. The wife has no such freedom. The Act No. VIII, 1939 gives her so much freedom that if she suffers from certain disabilities because of her husband she may claim a divorce in a court of law ; but

* R. Roberts: *The Social Laws of Quran*.

she has to prove the reality of her complaint. The man has to prove nothing. Under this system a woman is at the mercy of the temperament and caprice of her husband. She is under necessity to adjust herself to the vagaries of her lord ; with the husband there is no question of adjustment. 'A system where the wife has continually hanging over her head the apprehension of divorce cannot but prove an abiding source of uneasiness to her. It is an intolerable system.' *

The Ahmadiyya community wishes to give the same freedom to women. Thus Maulana Muhammad Ali in *The Religion of Islam* has made an attempt to show that in the matter of divorce the mind of the Prophet was inclined to place women on a par with men. We have already quoted a verse which refers the husband and wife to arbitration when they happen to disagree with each other. The Maulana's commentary on the verse is as follows: 'A breach between the two would imply that either the husband or the wife wants to break off the marriage agreement and hence either may claim a divorce when the parties can no longer pull on in agreement. In the process to be adopted both husband and

* *Ibid.*

wife are to be represented on a status of equality: a judge has to be appointed from his people and another from her people. The two are told to try to remove the differences and reconcile the parties to each other; if agreement cannot be brought about, a divorce will follow.'

The Maulana mentions two incidents from the life of the Holy Prophet to show that the two parties are 'on a perfect level of equality in the matter of divorce.' 'The Holy Prophet is related to have married a woman called Umaina or Bint-ul-Jaun, and when he went in to her she said that she sought refuge in God from him, that is to say, wanted a divorce and he granted her a divorce and sent her off with some presents. (Bu. 68:3). Another case is that of Thabit ibn Qais whose wife is reported to have come to the Holy Prophet and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! I do not find fault in Thabit ibn Qais regarding his morals or faith but I cannot pull on with him.' The Holy Prophet said: 'Wilt thou return to him his orchard'? (which he had settled upon her as a dowry). On receiving a reply in the affirmative, the Holy Prophet sent for Thabit and ordered him to take back his orchard and divorce his wife. (Bu. 68:11). These two

examples are sufficient to show that the wife had the right to claim divorce on those very grounds on which the husband could divorce his wife.

This is a fresh interpretation of the Muslim law of divorce. If it is accepted by civil courts both men and women will have unrestricted freedom of divorce and the stability of the marriage institution will be greatly undermined. We shall discuss this point again. Suffice it to say here that the Muslim wife, according to 'the fathers of the church,' is the victim of her husband's idiosyncrasies. Perfect equality between men and women is not offered by the Quran. Muhammad raised the status of women but did not make them equal to men. "But they have rights similar to those against them in a just manner, and the men are a degree above them, and God is Mighty, Wise." (2 : 228.) This is quite natural under a system where women are economically dependent upon men and are not in a position to fend for themselves.

The Muslim family is conceived after the pattern of Monarchy in which the husband has absolute authority. 'Everyone of you is a ruler, and every one shall be questioned about his subjects; the Amir (the King) is a ruler;

and the man is a ruler over the people of his house, and the woman is a ruler over the house of her husband and his children, so everyone of you is a ruler and everyone shall be questioned about his subjects.' (Bu. 67 : 91.) The wife, here, is only a subject of her husband who is the King with all the virtues and vices of an absolute monarch. Among the dictates of this monarch is the strict seclusion of women. Not only are they kept in 'purdah' but also have no free social intercourse with men even within their homes. They lead a separate life of their own. The custom of 'purdah' is based on sheer jealousy on the part of men and is best expressed by a Punjabi proverb which says: 'I am going to see the village fair. I wish all the women of the village *except my wife* to be there.' The seclusion of women was adopted by Hindus also. Although their 'purdah' is partial and ridiculous there is little social contact between the two sexes, not even a common meal.

The seclusion of women has been the cause of objectionable behaviour on the part of men. The irresistible stare which is inflicted upon the fair sex is a feature that cannot be associated with a decent social order. How awkward does it look when old and young,

even men with one foot in the grave, wheel round in a busy street and give withering stares to the fair occupants of a tonga or an automobile. If an over-painted girl passing through a busy street is assailed with questioning eyes from all round, it is a fact that can be explained through natural laws of attention and be regarded as a matter of course. But when even little bits of feet peeping out of the sandals of 'purdah' women become the victims of curious eyes, it is a fact that is abnormal and deplorable. You have only to stop your car in a busy street for a few minutes and mark how many of those who passed by you did not peep in. You have only to stop for a while outside a picture-hall after a show and watch how wistfully men wait for ladies to pass before them. You have only to pause for a moment at the finish of a public debate and sympathize with those who wait outside the hall for ladies to come out and give them long and lingering looks until their saris have faded into the darkness of the night. You have only to go every evening to a railway station and make a list of those gallants who take their post-parandial walks on the platform and 'stare off' unknown passengers in one train after another. This is morbid sex curiosity. The educated

display it as much as the illiterate. The presence of a single woman at a place sets the whole of it agog. This is the result of men and women living in water-tight compartments.

THE TRUTH

The Indian woman is a fly caught in a net deftly woven by men. In the New India we are trying to construct she will have freedom. There will be no question of the one sex domineering over the other. The relations between the two will be biologically and psychologically true and morally sound. There will be perfect equality though not uniformity.

Biologically every man is a woman and every woman a man. The difference is of more or less. This is what the latest researches in physiology teach us. What makes a male male is the internal secretion of the testicles known as testosterone. Experiments performed on rats in recent years have amply proved the importance of the male hormone in determining male characteristics. If a male rat is castrated just after birth he develops female traits. If a castrated rat is injected with 'active testicular extract' or if the testes of a male rat are grafted on to it, he again resumes male development.

On the other hand, "the removal of both ovaries from new-born rats does not perceptibly slow down the development of the female organs, nor does the injection of the female hormone or œstrin into castrates hasten it." If, however, the male hormone is injected into a young female rat it develops male characteristics. It appears that a female is female of her own account but a male is male because of the presence of the male hormone, in the absence of which he becomes female. "The female may therefore, be regarded as the basic type of the mammalian species, and the male as the more highly differentiated type derived from it by the action of the male hormone. Man may be considered, therefore, as derived from woman rather than woman from man. The myth of Lilith and not the story of the Garden of Eden is the better parable of man's birth. He, and not woman, represents Nature's second thoughts, the more specialized type, the rib taken from the woman's side and shaped into the likeness of a companion." *

The springs of human behaviour are certain fundamental drives, commonly known as instincts. Both men and women have the same number of instincts. Imprisoned by men, women

* Kenneth Walker : *The Physiology of Sex.*

could display only hunger and the maternal instinct, not even sex. The rest of their energies lay fallow.

The statement that women are intellectually inferior to men is baseless. Intellect has two factors, intelligence and knowledge. Intelligence is a native endowment. When women are born Nature is not sowing cabbages. She is impartial in the distribution of intelligence among the two sexes. Intelligence tests conducted in almost all countries have not proved the superiority of the one sex over the other. As regards knowledge, it is not a natural gift; it is acquired and being equal in intelligence women are as much capable of acquiring it as men. That their contribution to art, literature and science is little as compared with that of men is not because they could not make any such contribution but because they were not allowed to do so.

What, if they have a uterus? That makes them the guardian of humanity. But instead, they have had to pay a heavy price for it. They are told that their only function is the bearing of children. God has assigned to them this great task and they should concentrate on it with all their heart and with all their might. There is truth in this statement but the truth is grossly exaggerated. The exaggeration will be

manifest if we start with the proposition that men and women have equal value. Both play a part in the continuation of the race and besides the organs of reproduction which are different they have much that is common between them. If both get an equal opportunity to display their abilities and make use of their capacities for the welfare of society, our country will put on a different colour. Life would no longer remain a solo ; it will become a duet, far richer than before. In the one-sided relationship that we have had in this country for centuries life in reality has never been lived. The joy of real fellowship has never been experienced. Men associate with men and they part with abuses hurled at one another. The real fellowship can only arise when men associate with women and women with men as they do among members of their own sex ; that is, as equals. Few have ever enjoyed sex in this country. Sex-love is founded on equally enthusiastic co-operation between man and woman. It is an art that has to be learnt. But in a country where a woman is a slave or an evil or both the sex-act can be nothing more than mere ipsation.

If women are regarded as equal to men they must have rights, which constitute the birth-right of every human being, in an equal measure.

These rights relate to freedom of movement and speech, education, profession, sex, marriage and divorce. No doubt, these rights must have certain limits, without which there is always a danger to run to extremes. If extremes are to be avoided and a balanced life is to be constructed the limits of human rights must be properly defined. Well-defined limits enable us to preserve social values. It must be remembered that these limits are not inherent in the instinctual nature of man. They are a product of culture. Culture means the refinement of human nature which is achieved through ideals and laws, ideals for all and laws for those whose ideals are not strong enough to keep old Adam in check. But whatever the regulations of culture, they should be the same for both the sexes.

For women to enjoy freedom of speech and movement, the institution of 'purdah' must first be abolished. Men have no right to keep women in 'purdah'. At present there is no social life in this country. It has to be created. Whatever its nature, women shall have an equal share in it. Why should there be separate places for women in social gatherings? It is said that men do not behave. It may be asked: "Who will teach men proper behaviour?" Only women. Examples of undesirable behaviour on the part of men are

due to the fact that women are still regarded as mere sexual objects. It is for women to teach men that they are as good personalities as they themselves are. No man dare molest a woman who knows her mind and goes about with self-confidence and courage. When women meet men on an equal footing inside and outside the home, the disturbing sex curiosity will go and men's eyes will not fall on women with vulture-like avidity.

Men who cannot stay in the presence of women without having beads of perspiration on their foreheads feel that this will lead to immorality. Such men do not know what sex control is. For them control consists in shunning the stimulus. But that is no control, for any strong stimulus breaks it down. Control in the absence of the sex-stimulus is negative control. What we want is positive control which consists in the absence of excitement in the company of the opposite sex. Three things make possible its achievement: the giving of equal value to the members of the opposite sex, frequent contact with them and an ideal of social courtesy, helped by an inner feeling that the dignity of man lies in not allowing himself to become the sport of animal passions. The importance of the first should be clearly understood. The

idea that the other is as good as you are and may be superior in certain respects, is very often enough to restrain your passions. An anecdote from the life of Mustafa Kemal illustrates this point.

Kemal spent most of his life with painted girls who, he thought, 'were to be used and enjoyed.' But towards Latifa he behaved in a manner that was not usual with him. Latifa was educated in the West and was highly cultured. Kemal who had never bent before anybody found himself helpless against her. Armstrong has described his helplessness in a very graphic manner. 'He drew Latifa to him, and kissed her, covered her face with kisses, half carried her towards the inner room where his orderly had already made his bed.

For answer she drew suddenly away from him. 'You do not understand,' she said, 'I love you, but I will not be your mistress. Marry me and I am yours.'

'What is marriage?' he replied.... 'a few empty words said by a dirty bearded priest. Do they mean so much difference? Moreover, I have sworn not to marry until my work for Turkey is done. I need you. I need you now.'

'I too have sworn,' she replied, 'I will not give myself except in marriage. It is my condi-

tion. My oath holds as well as yours.'

They stood facing each other in the dark upper room, with the great fire below reddening the windows and ceiling—the girl haughty and imperious, the man with his finger crooked to take her. It was long since he had been so refused. *Yet there was something about the girl that made him hesitate to take her by force.** Despotic, self-willed, self-indulged, he was maddened to fury by her refusal. In a fury he flung himself away, and went out. In the morning his room was empty. He had gone to the army."*

It will be easily seen that our prescription does not mean the giving of moral sermons. It implies a particular type of life and a kind of social *milieu* that will make that life possible. When segregation of sexes no longer exists, when women get equal opportunities for self-expression, when inculcation of social courtesy becomes a part of education, sex control will be easily achieved. We accept the ideal of chastity but we make no fetish of it. We believe that chastity that must needs be maintained through 'dark glasses' and remaining aloof from the other sex is not worth having.

We may now briefly discuss the cultural

* Italics ours.

regulation of sex, comprising limits of sex satisfaction, marriage and divorce. How much satisfaction of sex? Humanity, more often than not, has not been able to answer this question correctly. At one time complete extinction of sex is advocated. This leads to the warping of human personality. Then a reaction occurs and people move to the other extreme of gratifying lusts without stint. This leads to national decay. Now, however, we have reached a stage of evolution when science has given us enough understanding of human nature, so that avoiding the extremes we can evolve a formula of living which will enable us to satisfy all sides of our nature in due proportion. According to this formula sex satisfaction will have a due place in our programme and sex control will be practised for the sake of health and strength, both personal and national.

Sex control as practised by Yogis and Nirvana-intoxicated egotists is not desirable, nor is it possible to be achieved by everybody. It consists in continence both physical and mental. Physical continence may be possible in towns and villages but mental continence is feasible only in solitary caves of the Himalayas and there also after difficult practices. Sex phantasies are a part of human nature. They appear in varying

degrees among ninety-nine per cent of human beings and the hundredth is a liar. To teach people, especially boys and girls, that the appearance of sexual thoughts and images in the mind is a sin, is to produce in them, unnecessarily, a sense of guilt and great fear associated with it that wrecks their lives. For one of the chief causes of frigidity in women and impotence and premature ejaculation in men is this sense of guilt which is generally unconscious and deep-seated. The reasonable attitude is that sex is not a sin and physical continence alone is practicable.

How far is continence desirable or how far can it be kept up without damaging physical and mental health? This is a question that is uppermost in our minds to-day; for delayed marriages and no marriages are phenomena that are of very recent occurrence. Findings of modern psychology and commonsense will enable us to answer the question. Books on sex appear every day in plenty and many of them are written by specialists and make fine reading. But the opinion of specialists is not without its dangers; for they see the trees and their own trees but miss the wood. As a sick man said, 'There are specialists to treat my heart, my lungs, liver and other organs, but there is

none to treat me.'

Experts in sexology study only sex and they are so obsessed with their studies that they forget that man has other instincts also and beside instincts he has ideals he lives by. Sex is one element in human personality that has many others besides.

In a truly cultured person sex is subordinated to the whole of the personality. Because sexologists do not view sex in this light they make categorical assertions regarding the disastrous effects of continence. They say that their experience has revealed that continence leads to mental as well as physical ill-health. It must be remembered that their experience is confined only to those who suffered because of continence. There may be those who did not suffer at all or, at least, not so much as to be forced to go to experts, and their number may be greater. A wider experience shows that sex continence has proved injurious in certain cases, a little disturbing in others and quite healthy in still others. The success or failure of continence depends on the original strength of the sexual impulse which varies from person to person; and the type of life one leads. A quiet life, free from excitements, both physical and mental, is a necessary condition of continence.

A person, who has not regulated his life in regard to food, sleep, work and recreation and lives in all sorts of excitements, invites disaster if he is continent. The excited sexual impulse must have an outlet, or turning inwards it will create serious mental and physical maladies. Those who know the technique of continence and live it rigidly would certainly be continent without being ill. There are certain persons, however, who cannot sublimate sex with the best of intention and the best of technique. They are the 'hot stuff.' For them continence is really harmful. Even among those who do not belong to this category there are exceptionally few who can remain safely continent throughout life. Marriage, therefore, is necessary for the majority of the human race. Marriage should not be too much delayed. In our country the best years of marriage for girls are from sixteen to twenty and for boys from twenty to twenty-five. Pre-nuptial continence should be the accepted ideal of our society and young people should form a strong sentiment for it. Whatever we may say against the exaggerated claims of Brahmacharya there is a germ of truth in it. We may not believe, as some ancients believed and as Mahatma Gandhi believes to-day, that a single seminal discharge means the

loss of energy that can never be replaced, but we cannot help believing that wastage of sex energy especially and, in early youth, makes one unfit for the onerous tasks of life and a victim of diseases which are natural only to old age. Those youngmen and women who are breathing the air of emancipation and are caught by the glamour of a loose life think that they can easily make up for the dissipated energy with wines and drugs. They are seriously mistaken and are not only their own enemies but those of the nation. No nation who is anxious to preserve her values would countenance the way of these young people.

MARRIAGE

Marriages, it is said, are becoming more and more difficult. Unemployment of young men is put forward as the main cause. We, however, believe that if the superstition of caste is completely given up, if marriage is regarded as it ought to be regarded, if young men do not put a price on themselves and if young women do not wait for princes, marriages would become much easier than they are to-day. In cases of economic difficulty marriages can still take place and with the knowledge science has placed before

us the advent of children can be postponed until the time the couple can afford them. Some years ago, speaking at a meeting of the "Ethical Society of Manchester University," Dr. Marie Stopes gave a very useful and feasible suggestion in this connection. She said, "Let young girls who are still studying or working take the young men of their choice; let them marry. You don't eat any more or wear any more clothes if you are married. The idea that you must immediately furnish a home when you marry is false and injurious tradition, specially in difficult times such as these.Young people of eighteen and upwards should carry on with what they are doing and live as married people even if they are in different towns. They could spend all their weak-ends and spare time together, and have a few years of life together, when romance is building up their relationship. Then, when they are ready, they can set up a home and have children."

Much has been written of late on success and failure in marriage. The popular way in which marriages are arranged in this country has come in for severe criticism by many educated young men and women. Marriage by arrangement, in which parents' hand in the choice of partners is supreme, is condemned as

a tyranny and is regarded as the main cause of unhappiness in wedlock. It is true that many parents become high-handed in this matter and their conduct does become tyrannical but to call marriage by arrangement the main cause of marital unhappiness is a rash generalisation. In fact, marriages by arrangement show a better record of happiness than those based on mere sexual attraction, popularly called romantic love. We are here neither condemning the one nor praising the other ; but we wish to lay before our readers the truth about success in marriage.* Twenty-five per cent of the success may be attributed to the wise choice of the partner, fifty per cent to the effort at mutual adjustment and twenty-five per cent to luck. The secret of success mainly lies in mutual understanding and sympathy and affection which grow out of that understanding. This is called right adjustment. It involves sacrifices on both sides. As an example we may take the case of a girl whose parents are strict vegetarians and she herself is so 'sensitive that the sight of meat makes her sick. She is married to a meat-eater. The young man insists on her taking meat and may force her to adopt a new way. She may or may not succeed

* *Vide—New Homes for a New India*, last chapter.

but the thing is bound to cause unhappiness to both sides. Harmony can be achieved here by a little sacrifice on either or both sides. The young woman may willingly accustom herself to a non-vegetarian diet, or the young man may give up taking meat for the sake of his wife or the wife may go so far as to cook meat without eating it. These are examples of successful adjustments which make for marital happiness. Adjustment is not achieved at the end of the honeymoon. It is an ever-growing process. Life is a series of adjustments. It takes three to five years for a tolerable marital adjustment to be made.

The choice of the partner is important. The choice made on the basis of mere romantic love is not without its dangers. For mutual sex-attraction is more often than not illusory and for the purpose of life-companionship not an unerring guide. A wiser plan is that both parents and their children should co-operate in choosing partners. A couple of months should elapse before the wedding is arranged, during which time the parents of the girl should invite the boy to stay with them more than once and the parents of the boy should give opportunities to the girl to become familiar with their people. Such a plan would meet the needs of

the modern youth and at the same time will not in any way injure the ideals of the country. Whether marriage occurs through romantic love or through 'arrangement', there should be adequate preparation for it.

Preparation for marriage comprises special knowledge and an ideal. Every young man or woman contemplating to enter into wedlock must be acquainted with main facts regarding the psychology and physiology of both sexes, must have a fair knowledge of contraceptives, must regard marriage as sacred and must be willing to adjust his or her taste and point of view to that of his or her partner. Persons poles apart in taste and general outlook in life should never be joined together in marriage. Ten to one they will not be able to create harmony between themselves. It is for this reason that young persons should be warned against too quick and rash choices.

Marriages preceded by proper preparation will seldom go wrong and the occasion for divorce will not arise. Divorce is an evil. It is a defeat of human personality. It is a sign that the partners have failed to effect an adjustment. The question is, 'Did the couple make a serious effort at adjustment?' In a society where divorce is easy to obtain such an

effort will be missing. The sentiment for adjustment is greatly strengthened by the thought that divorce cannot be had for the asking. The system of no divorce is an ideal system, provided marriage is preceded by proper education. It is not hospitals that keep us healthy but the control of the causes that produce ill-health. It is not the laws of divorce, strict or lax, that will be conducive to happiness in marriage, but it is scientific knowledge and ideals that will help the couple to create harmony between themselves. We strongly urge the need for preparatory schools where prospective couples may get all-round training for setting up homes.

We start with the proposition that men and women are equal. They have not so far been regarded as equal in our country. Men have enjoyed certain privileges denied to women. The Muslim man can have more than one wife and can divorce his wife any time he likes. On the basis of equality the Muslim woman should have the right to contract more than one matrimonial alliance and should have the same unrestricted freedom of divorce. Polygamy must be matched with polyandry. That men are polygamous and women monogamous is a myth constructed by men to their own advantage. Polygamy and monogamy are

just social institutions. The truth about human nature is that both men and women are equally poly-erotic ; that is, the desire for more than one is there in both. And surely an institution that allows men to satisfy that desire and withholds that privilege from women is unjust.

But mere desire is not culture. And if it be felt that polyandry sanctioned along with polygamy will result in moral chaos, both should go. Therein lies justice. Monogamy alone can safeguard the dignity and self-respect of women. The right direction of marriage reform in this country would be to take away from men the right of contracting two or more contemporaneous marriages.

A monogamous marriage should also be a permanent marriage. A permanent marriage ensures the care and education of children and leads to social integrity. Some modern people would consign children to the care of the state. We differ with them. Children should not be wholly left to the care of the state, however scientific that care may be. There is no substitute for the mother, and the bottle, psychologically, cannot replace the breast. Women derive infinite pleasure from suckling their babies and children derive infinite pleasure from sucking at the breast. Deprived of that

pleasure they will never feel at home in the world. A society founded on bottle-fed babies will be a society of dissatisfied and disgruntled men and women.

A sound culture will always be founded on family life. Family life not only satisfies a number of human propensities but is also the best school for the training of personality. A permanent marriage gives a stable family life. The ideals and laws of a society should be strong enough and the preparatory training sound enough to help marriages to stay.

DIVORCE

Is there a room for divorce in the organisation we have outlined above? Yes. We must allow for human error. Suppose in a certain case a very wrong choice has been made and there is either no effort at adjustment on either side or the effort has completely failed. In these circumstances the right course to adopt is to allow the couple to separate. However ugly and inhuman divorce may be, in certain hard cases we are compelled to accept it as inevitable. Some of such cases are of cruelty, unbearable faithlessness, incurable aversion to adjustment, habitual crime and drunkenness,

impotence, insanity and social diseases. It may be asked : 'What will children do if there are any? We may ask : 'What were they doing in a home full of hate, suspicion and mistrust?' Such homes are egregiously dangerous for the right development of children. We, therefore, do not condemn divorce from the point of view of the welfare of children. If divorce cannot be helped Law should make some provision for children.

In the preceding pages we have outlined the main defects from which Indian Society suffers. These defects *can* be removed. The way lies through a well-conceived and well-organised educational programme which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

HOPEFUL EDUCATION

THE IDEAL

In a country, where men are slaves of other men, women of men and children of both, the educational ideal should be clear and the educational effort tremendous. If education does not change a nation, nothing else will. But wrong education may change it for the worse.

Education has two parts, the ideal and the method which comprises all the means to realise the ideal. The ideal of education is rooted in individual and social needs of human beings. The needs may be temporary or permanent. In the last Great War Germany suffered a crushing defeat and by the treaty of Versailles lost many of her possessions. But there were men in Germany so constituted that they could not accept defeat. They strongly wanted to win back what the nation had lost. Among them was Hitler, exceedingly thirsty for power and prestige. In the silent hours of the night he must have taken vows that Germany should rise again. He gathered round him men of his own frame of mind, strong men who could best

play second fiddle to him. Gradually he brushed aside all opposition and rose to be the first man in Germany, a man of ruthless patriotism whose ideal was to destroy the treaty of Versailles and make Germany the first nation in the world. With this end in view he wanted to militarise the whole of his nation. This was a need, a temporary need. It created an ideal of education which was to make a soldier of every young man and woman in Germany. The means of education, the home, school, press, platform and the radio, were all organised after a military pattern. So intense was the enthusiasm and so vigorous the effort that in a few years a new nation of soldiers was produced, ready to risk their all for the sake of the nation. This is an example of a temporary ideal of a society and a special educational process to realise it.

But the ideal may have permanent values in view. It may aim at producing personalities devoted to Truth, Justice, Beauty, Equality, Co-operation and Reason. Education under this ideal will be much different from what we have had in Germany of late years.

Education is the modification of a human being according to an ideal. It must be distinguished from mere literacy which is only an instrument of the educated man, though a

necessary instrument. When literacy alone is the aim it will not be education ; it will be mere instruction. To be called education the effort of the teacher and the parent must be directed towards the creation of persons with a definite character. According to this view we have had, at least from the time of foreign invasions, no real education in India.

In the Vedic Age the Aryans did not mock at the earth. They evolved an ideal of life under the discipline of moral law. They had a definite course of education which made every young man and woman fit to live that ideal in practice. But this ideal was damaged by priestcraft, Buddhism, Jainism and Vedanta. The first made machines of men and the rest unmanned men by making them fix their gaze on what comes hereafter and look down upon the dust of which they were made. This was the time when brahmans and monks dictated the principles of living. Under the Muslim rule, to the brahman and the monk was added the mullah, and the three conspired to repress human personality. With them education consisted in learning certain dogmas belonging to different churches. The conception of liberal education did not exist at all.

The Englishman came and said, "Not the

brahman, nor the monk, nor the mullah but I will rule the lives of the people of this country." Thus English education was born. A few other factors aided it. The Christian missionary with his necessary adjuncts, the hospital and the school; men like Charles Grant who sincerely believed that Indian society needed great improvement which could only be had through English education; and enlightened Hindus like Ram Mohan Roy had prepared the ground for English education before Macaulay came to set his seal to it. Ram Mohan Roy's note to Lord Amherst, when a Sanskrit college for Calcutta was proposed, is significant. "We find that the Government are establishing a Sanskrit school under Hindu pundits to impart such knowledge as is already current in India. This seminary (similar in character to those which existed in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon) can only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessor or society. The pupils will then acquire what was known 2,000 years ago, with the addition of vain and empty subtleties since produced by speculative men, such as is already taught in all parts of India.But as the improvement of native popu-

lation is the object of Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal system of instruction ; embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, with other useful sciences which may be accomplished with the sum proposed, by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning, educated in Europe, and providing a college with the necessary books, instruments, and other appliances."

Mountstuart Elphinstone and Sir Thomas Munro set the ball rolling in favour of English education in Bombay and Madras, respectively. Such an atmosphere, already in existence, made Macaulay bold to say, "We are withholding from them the learning for which they are craving; we are forcing on them the mock learning which they nauseate." He said, "We ought to employ them in teaching what is best worth knowing; that English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic, that the natives are desirous to be taught English, and are not desirous to be taught Sanskrit or Arabic; that neither as the language of law, nor as the language of religion has the Sanskrit or Arabic any peculiar claim to our engagement, that it is possible to make natives of this country good English scholars, and to this end our efforts ought to be directed."

The famous Minute was submitted on the 2nd of February, 1835. On the 7th of March the resolution of the Governor-General decided the educational fate of this country. The resolution ran thus :--

“ His Lordship in Council is of opinion that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India; and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone.” After nine years, in 1844, Lord Hardinge gave a further impetus to English education by means of another resolution. “ The Governor-General having taken into consideration the existing state of education in Bengal, and being of opinion that it is highly desirable to afford it every reasonable encouragement by holding out to those who have taken advantage of the opportunities afforded them a fair prospect of employment in the Public Service and thereby not only to reward individual merit, but to enable the state to profit as largely and as early as possible, by the result of the measures adopted of late years for the instruction of the people as well by the Government as by private individuals and Societies, has resolved that in every possible

case a preference shall be given in the selection of candidates for public employment to those who have been educated in the institutions thus established and especially to those who have distinguished themselves therein by a more than ordinary degree of merit and attainment."

This resolution coupled with a desire on the part of the people to imitate the manner of their masters gave English education a supreme place in India. But it was not English education but only English towards which the effort of the people was directed. It was but natural. The Government wanted to run its machinery with the help of Indians. They were satisfied if they got men who could use English with ease and facility. Government services became the main end of education. And higher this education better were the prospects of prosperous jobs. The whole nation moved towards this ideal, with the result that the universities became more popular than schools and produced adults who had passed examinations without being in the least really cultured. The aim of education was merely literacy in English. Everything else was subordinated to it. Sir Charles Wood's dispatch of 1854 gave us big universities but they were not centres of

culture ; they were examining institutions and made examination the chief event in the lives of the youths of this country. Sir Henry Maine said, " For my part, I do not think anything of the kind has been seen by any European University since the Middle Ages, and I doubt whether there is anything founded by, or connected with, the British Government in India which excites so much practical interest in native households of the better class, from Calcutta to Lahore, as the examinations of this (Calcutta) University."

If the end of education was the production of half-baked baboos, education in this country was a great success ; if something else it was an utter failure. As early as 1901 a critic wrote : ' If education is the transmission of life from the living through the living to the living, we do not know how to describe the system of teaching that prevails here. It is carrying death from the dead through the dead to the dead.' *

A Commission to go over the whole question of Indian Education was appointed in 1882. The Commission did good work. It surveyed the whole field of education and laid down principles of policy and administration. Very rightly it showed an inclination to divert the

* Quoted by H. R. James in *Education and Statesmanship*.

attention of the Government from higher education to elementary education. "The primary education," it recommended, "be declared to be that part of the whole system of Public Instruction which possesses an almost exclusive claim on local funds set apart for education and a large claim on provincial revenues." This was a great recommendation but the ideal of education being very narrow it was not appreciated and followed. Apart from many good things the Commission did it sanctified an evil already in existence by declaring that "preference be given to that system which regulates the aid given mainly according to the results of examinations." The system of 'payment by results' reduced education to tricks of memory and indirectly encouraged deceit and dishonesty. During the years that followed the Commission of 1882, university education expanded on a very lavish scale and the nation prided itself on its achievements in that direction. Schools were of no importance as compared with colleges. The primary school was a preparation for the secondary school and the latter for the university. There were protests, no doubt, but they were a cry in the wilderness. In 1910 Mr. Gopal Kishan Gokhale brought forward a Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council to

make elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country. The Bill was rejected by a big majority because it was thought to be premature and unnecessary.

In 1912 King George V paid a visit to India. In replying to the address of the Calcutta University on the 6th of January he said, "It is my wish that there may be spread over the land a network of schools and colleges, from which will go forth loyal and manly and useful citizens, able to hold their own in industries and agriculture and all the vocations of life." The wish of the Emperor was immediately carried into effect by the Under-Secretary of State for India by considerably increasing the annual allotment to Education. This was followed by a Resolution of the Government of India in 1913 declaring their New Indian Educational Policy. This policy laid special emphasis on Character-building, Hygiene, and Primary Education. It recommended that "there should be a large expansion of lower primary schools teaching the three R's with drawing, knowledge of the village map, nature-study and physical exercise, that simultaneously upper primary schools should be established at suitable centres and lower primary schools should, where necessary, be developed into upper primary schools ;

that expansion should be secured by means of board schools, except where this is financially impossible, when aided schools under recognized management should be encouraged." It also recommended that teachers in primary schools should be trained and 'be drawn from the class of the boys whom they will teach.' The Government of India recognized the principle of compulsory and free education but for 'reasons of decisive weight' could not see their way to put it in practice.

During the decade that followed 1913 every province became more and more alive to the need of Primary Education. A general desire to expand it expressed itself in the form of Primary Education Acts. Bombay took the lead in 1918 and Bengal, Madras, the Punjab, the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa followed in 1919. The Assam Primary Education Act came into operation in 1926.

This short history of a century of education in India shows that the progress of education was slow and halting, that the ideal of education was a pseudo-ideal and that it was based on the desire of the English to run the machinery of their government and the desire of the Indian to become a part of that machinery. Now we seem to have outgrown this stage. The man in the street

avers, 'Not the priest, nor the Englishman shall rule over us but we ourselves will be our rulers.' This makes the educational perspective really national. The question that arises now is: How shall we educate our masses, our mothers and our masters? What type of men and women shall we produce, so that they may take their rightful place among the strong and onward-marching nations; what type of leaders who would show the way; and what type of mothers who would lay the solid foundations of both? What type of persons am I going to produce through the process of education I am suggesting? If an educationist does not put this question to himself he is not worth his salt. What type of men and women am I going to produce? If a parent does not ask this question he is not doing his job. If a teacher does not he is wasting his time. The educationist, the teacher and the parent must have a vision. Without a vision all educational effort is futile. But the vision should not be unsuitable as that of Mahatma Gandhi.

WARDHA SCHEME

In 1937 Mahatma Gandhi evolved an educational scheme of elementary education for the

whole of India. The details of the scheme were worked out by a committee appointed by the Congress, which met at Wardha under the presidency of Mr. Zakir Husain. The scheme is popularly known as the Wardha Scheme.

The Zakir Husain Committee wants to make Indian children 'responsive to the realistic elements of the present situation' and inspire them 'by life-giving creative ideals.' It expects to produce in them 'a keen sense of personal worth, dignity, efficiency and the will to strengthen in them the desire for self-improvement and social service in a co-operative community.' This is the ideal of Indian education as conceived by the Committee and is really a fine one. But tagged on to the scheme of education given by Mahatma Gandhi it makes a strange combination. For this ideal concentrates on the all-round development of the human personality but Mahatma Gandhi's scheme lays emphasis on the economic wants of man.

Mahatma Gandhi's scheme consists of two parts. (1) Primary education extending over a period of seven years or longer, and covering all the subjects up to the Matriculation standard except English plus a vocation used as the vehicle for drawing out the minds of boys and girls in all departments of knowledge, should

take the place of what passes to-day under the name of Primary, Middle and High School Education.

The education of the child has to move round a basic craft. The basic crafts proposed in the scheme are: spinning and weaving, carpentry, agriculture, fruit and vegetable gardening, leather-work, and other crafts for which local and geographical conditions are favourable. The following time-table is proposed:—

The basic craft	...	3 hours—30	mints.
Music, drawing, and arithmetic		40	"
The Mother-tongue	...	40	"
Social studies & general science		30	"
Recess	...	10	"
<hr/>			
Total	...	5 hours—30	mints.

(2) 'Such education, taken as a whole, can, must be self-supporting; in fact self-supporting is the acid test,.....For me it is the crux.'

Mahatma Gandhi gives a 7-year programme of education beginning with the age of seven. He abolishes the distinction between primary, middle and high school education. He has at heart the emancipation of the villages of India. The programme centres round a vocation or a basic craft. 'You have to train the boy in one

occupation or another. Round this special occupation you will train up his mind, his body, his handwriting, his artistic sense and so on. He will be master of the craft he learns.'

'.....The State takes charge of the child at seven and returns it to the family as an earning unit.' From these words it appears that it is a scheme of vocational training rather than of liberal education. That is why the child is asked to come to school at 7 and not at 5 because by 7 he is able to handle simple tools. For the same reason out of 5 hours and 30 minutes of school, 3 hours and 30 minutes are devoted to the basic craft. At the end of the 7-year course the test of an educated boy or a girl will be not how much he knows and what he is, but how much he can efficiently do profit-giving labour in some one of the village crafts. The basic craft which the Mahatma advocates is spinning and weaving. 'I am convinced,' says he, 'that Takli is the only practical solution of our problem, considering the deplorable economic conditions prevailing in the country'.....'My advice is that the primary education should centre round the Takli.'

Critics say that Mahatma Gandhi makes education sordid. Right from the beginning

his scheme gives the child a sense of exchange, labour and profit and with undue emphasis. The Mahatma replies: 'There is nothing sordid about economic calculations. True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard. Just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates Mammon-worship and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science.'

This brings us to the man behind the scheme and the philosophy of life dear to his heart through which he wants to bring about the salvation of his country. The Mahatma has in view a particular type of citizen. He believes that the future citizen of India should be a non-violent person, just able to earn a simple living, passing his days without any competition in a self-contained village. By his scheme, he believes, he will be able to provide every villager with work and give him food if not money. 'God did not create us to eat, drink and be merry but to earn our bread in the sweat of our brow.'

The position is made very clear by Mr. Mahadev Desai. Says he, 'Unless we bear in mind that the new scheme is intended to bring

into being a new age from which class and communal hatred is eliminated and exploitation is eschewed, we cannot make a success of it. We should, therefore, approach the task with firm faith in non-violence and the faith that the new scheme is evolved by a mind that has conceived non-violence as the panacea of all evils.'

If we accept Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of life we accept his educational ideal and consequently his educational scheme. Then for us it is a flawless scheme. But if we reject his philosophy of life, then for us the scheme is full of defects.

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of life, as we have said above, is not suited to an average person. We want an ideal of life that an ordinary person may be able to follow. The mistake so far committed by Indian leaders has been to place before the common man ideals that only a select few could pursue. *A philosophy of life should answer the political, economic and moral needs of a people in the world of to-day.*

Politically every nation, to-day, lies exposed to every other. Since man learnt to fly no nation could boast of natural barriers. Our immediate neighbours are not the Afghans and

the chief source of danger is not the Khyber Pass. Japan, Italy, Russia and Germany are our neighbours. Against the nations who are being brought up in military tradition a non-violent mentality is mockery, absurdity and folly. Non-violence is expected to make an appeal to the moral sense of the opponent. But what about those who have moral standards quite different from ours. We may curse them when they rush at our throats but they will certainly bless us and sing praises of our foolishness. We must look to the adjustments that the world around us demands of us. These adjustments are not possible under an educational programme in which three-fourths of the time is devoted to spinning yarn and where in the meagre time left 'our arithmetic, our science, our history will have a non-violent approach and the problems in those subjects will be coloured by non-violence.' In the age of the mustard gas, bombers and anti-aircraft guns Mahatma Gandhi wants to experiment with his nation, which from the political point of view the latter cannot afford. Education should prepare a nation for all emergencies of life, for peace as well as for war. From this point of view the Wardha Scheme is a murderous scheme. Mahatma Gandhi has the vision of a lamb and

a lion drinking at the same pond. But if the lion is not prepared to come under his influence the result of his attempt would be that the lamb will become a greater lamb and fall an easier prey to the lion. In the present-day world every lamb must turn into a lion if he wants to survive. There can be no peace in this world unless every nation becomes as strong as every other. A weak nation is a sure temptation to the strong.

The economic ideal inherent in the Wardha Scheme is equally hopeless. Like all good people the Mahatma is against competition and exploitation. But his approach to the problem of abolishing both is faulty. He quarrels with the tools of modern civilisation. He asks people not to touch them with a pair of tongs, still less without. He preaches voluntary poverty and trusteeship of the rich, a conception that is too ancient for the modern world. His scheme of education will enable every person just to maintain himself. He should never dream of raising his standard of life, in which the Mahatma does not believe at all. The Mahatma's mind was never able to free itself from the old fallacy of insisting on individual reformation without making radical changes in the social structure.

That God created us to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow, is a foolish sentiment. Have the scientists conspired with Evil to bring woe and misery to mankind? Are the labours of the finest brains created by God only a stunt of the devil? The logic of those who decry the goods of modern civilisation is just like that of the woman who does not allow his son to fly kites because in that connection his great grandfather had a fall from the roof of the house and had died. It is no logic ; it is superstition. If the goods of civilisation have brought misery to mankind it is no fault of the goods. With a torch you may make a fire and warm your tired limbs on a cold winter evening. With the same torch you may set fire to palatial buildings in Delhi. The problem before humanity is not how to avoid the appliances of civilisation but how best to use them to its advantage.

Why did God create us to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow? It must be a strange God who produces the amenities of life, the beauties and joys, and then expects us to reject them. Why should we not improve our standard of living? Why should we not make an effort to earn our bread without the sweat of the brow? Why should we not have butter with bread? Instead of rejecting modern

appliances because they have so far been mis-handled, we should find a better way of using them.

To escape into voluntary poverty because we have not learnt to make use of riches is neither bravery nor wisdom. It is also poor morality. It is the birthright of every human being to enjoy the maximum of comfort and happiness. In fighting for it lies his dignity. In short, politically, economically and morally the Wardha Scheme of Education is an unsuitable fabric spun on the Takli of Mahatma Gandhi. While Dr. Zakir Husain and his colleagues wish to "exploit for educative purposes the resources implicit in craft-work," the Mahatma is keen on exploiting for the purpose of reducing his airy dogmas to practice, all resources explicit in education. The scheme, if worked, will produce men and women who will be helpless in the present-day world. The Indian is like the gentleman in a hotel who began to cry for help at night. The manager from below called out, 'What can I do for you? Sherry, cocktail, coffee? What shall I send?' 'No,' replied the gentleman, 'I am locked from inside. Send me the key.' The Indian needs a key which will open his inside out to the *realities of this world*. The key is

an education that should do three things. *It should give every Indian a scientific outlook on life. It should restore the dignity of human personality which has been receiving blow after blow from mahatmas and saints for the last two thousand years. It should release human energy in co-operative channels and make every person zestful enough to make the most of this life.*

The second part of the Wardha Scheme is that it is self-supporting. The products of the school have to be bought by the state and it is made incumbent on every state to do so. This means that the very existence of the school depends on how much it is able to turn out by way of marketable goods. This will naturally emphasise the vocational aspect of the school and make drudges of our children at a very tender age. In spite of all its high pretensions the nature of the scheme is such that it cannot escape being soul-killing.*

In order to overcome this serious defect the Congress Party of C. P. and Berar evolved another scheme of education known as the Vidya Mandir Scheme. On the 14th December, 1937,

* The criticism on the Wardha Scheme is taken from the author's articles in *The Civil & Military Gazette*, Lahore, January and February, 1938 and *The Tribune of Lahore*, June, 1938.

the C. P. Government accepted this scheme. Vidya Mandir means a temple of learning or a school. It is not much different from a Gandhi school except that it is not self-supporting. It is financed in the following manner :—

(1) Grant of land sufficient in area to give the teacher a living wage according to the locality in which the school is situate. Living wage will ordinarily mean about Rs. 15 per mensem. The area of the land will differ from village to village and tract to tract.....The grant of land will be the primary end and the main source of income for the support of a Vidya Mandir.

(2) There are other sources from which income can be augmented :—

(a) All the charities in a village on festive and other occasions should be diverted to Vidya Mandirs.

(b) Merchants, traders and others, who have with them money collected from village people as Dharamdao, should be called upon to devote a good share of their collection towards Vidya Mandirs.

(c) Another source of income and an important source will be panchayati kothis. Panchayati kothis may be called grain banks of villages. In these grain banks cultivators may

deposit a part of their income in kind every year at the time of harvest..... The stock is or will be administered by Panchas who will be elected by the subscribers themselves.

Any member is entitled to borrow grain from the kothi to a limit fixed for each by the Panchas and the borrower would agree to pay back the stock with interest thereon at the time of the next harvest.....50% of the profits of these grain banks should go to Vidya Mandirs.

(d) In every Vidya Mandir education in or through some central industry may be given. This will also augment the income of Vidya Mandirs to a certain extent.

(e) In the event of famine or scarcity calling for Government help if the endowment funds are not able to support Vidya Mandirs, Government assistance can always be relied on. It is needless to dilate upon this point.

WOOD-ABBOT REPORT

The year 1937 may be regarded as a landmark in the history of Indian education. In this year the first attempt was made by the people of this country to evolve a scheme of national education, though it was wrong. In

the same year the Wood-Abbot Report on Vocational Education in India came out. Messrs. S. H. Wood and A. Abbot, two educational experts, came to India in November, 1936, at the request of the Government of India to report on the condition and possibilities of improving Indian education. They had the following terms of reference:—

“To advise

(1) Whether any vocational or practical training should be imparted in primary, secondary and higher secondary schools and if so, what should be its nature and extent?

(2) In the light of the answer to (1), to advise whether the technical or vocational institutions already in existence can be improved and if so, in what manner and, if new institutions for vocational or technical training be required, to suggest—

(i) the type of institution or institutions required for the purpose; (ii) the stage at which diversion of the students from the ordinary secondary schools (lower or higher) to such institutions should be effected; and (iii) the means to be adopted for effecting such diversion, *i.e.*, vocational guidance.

(3) The differentiation or special arrangements needed to meet the special requirements

of rural areas, specially in view of the desirability of remedying the trend of the present educational system to draw many boys and girls from rural areas to towns where they receive a purely literary form of education and, by so doing, not only congest still further the high schools but also become very largely lost to the service of the countryside."

The Wood-Abbot report* is divided into two parts. The first deals with general education and the second with vocational training. It is interesting to note that the authors of the report emphasise the importance of a sound general education as a basis of all vocational training. They say, "We regard reform of the content of general education as being even more important than a reorganisation of the framework of the educational reform." On the content of education depends all nation-building.

The chapter on general education is written by Mr. Wood. He starts with the assertion that the persons to take charge of children are women and that, consequently, primary schools should be supervised by women who 'have the competence, the sympathy, and the understanding necessary for the education of young

* From an article by the author in *The Tribune*, Lahore, August 21, 1937.

children.' Mr. Wood then goes on to define education. 'Literacy is not the primary aim of education in schools. Concentration on literacy (is) a mistake.' 'Cunning books, learning by heart, and chanting in unison, have their legitimate place in the disciplines of learning but they do not by themselves constitute an education for young children'.....' Education whether it be general or vocational is thus concerned with behaviour.....It is idle to expect the younger generation to make a contribution to the good life of their country unless, as individuals, they are offered satisfying personal and social experiences in the school.'

In the light of the above definition of education Mr. Wood suggests the general nature of the curriculum. A suitable curriculum, for infants, he thinks, besides formal instruction should include 'acting and singing, physical exercises, games and dancing; nature study and the care for flowers and, it may be animals; drawing and making things.' Drawing and making things should not consist in mere imitation. They should be creative. Mr. Wood expresses the idea thus: 'It is a waste of opportunity to ask children to make an elephant from a mould when there is material available for each child to fashion his own elephant.' Mr. Wood recom-

mends active schools in place of passive, listening schools where children are glued to desks in graveyard solemnity and have their personalities smothered. 'Our object,' says he, 'has been not to decry instruction but to plead for the inclusion of activity as part of the educational process in the conviction that for boys of this age, 'doing' is the beginning of 'learning'....., we need not pursue in detail this analysis of the school-day in the primary schools. The work of children in classes III and IV should be adapted to the increasing capacities and interest of the children, but it should be based on the fact that children of eight, nine and ten years of age are growing rapidly in body, mind and spirit, and that it is the function of the school at this stage to minister to their growth by enriching experiences through activities as well by book learning.'

In the Middle and High School Mr. Wood keeps up the frame-work of activities with opportunities for a wider and richer experience. As regards the medium of instruction, the educational expert recommends the vernacular and gives English 'its extremely important place as a compulsory first language in the High School.' It is the work-a-day English that is emphasised and not the bookish and scholastic

type.

The importance of the right teacher-training is duly stressed. The teacher is asked to feel dignified and an important member of the community. 'The normal school should concern itself with the social 'why' of education as well as with the technical 'how' of teaching. If a teacher appreciates his task as an educator and realises the significance of the school in the life of the community he may become proud of his vocation and resist temptation to bring discredit upon it.

Teachers should be well-paid and well-looked after. The recommended normal school will have a three-year course and will provide the young pupil-teacher with both technical and cultural education.

The training in the Normal School will be supplemented with refresher courses which will enable the teacher to keep his interest alive, give him staying power and prevent his morale from being sagged.

A constant improvement in education requires very efficient administration. But in India the state of affairs is deplorable. 'Decisions,' says Mr. Wood, 'are too often taken and appointments and promotions too often made on grounds not concerned primarily with

the welfare of the schools and of the children in them but to placate or promote political, communal or family interests.' It is because of this reason that the right type of persons are seldom selected. Mr. Wood regards this as a 'major tragedy in India.' This defect will only be remedied when the general outlook on life becomes thoroughly national.

The Commission of 1882 made a recommendation that "as a general rule transfers of officers from Professorships of colleges to Inspectorships of schools, and *vice versa*, be not made." Inspectors whether in charge of Divisions, Districts or smaller areas should be thoroughly grounded in the theory and practice of education and should have spent some years in schools. Only such persons can animate schools with the real spirit of education. That this principle has so far not been fully followed only argues that the real importance of education has not yet been appreciated by our countrymen. Mr. Wood goes a step further. He suggests "that the more responsible inspectors should have opportunities of studying educational practice and methods of inspection in other countries. It is desirable also that carefully selected teachers should pay visits abroad."

Mr. Wood gives the general principles of

what we call sound education which should be borne in mind by any person trying to frame a new educational scheme.

The Punjab, in many respects a progressive province, caught the educational zest of the year 1937 and emphatically declared itself in favour of a new educational scheme as against the old one which was proving ineffective. Thus the Minister of Education writing in the *Civil and Military Gazette* dated August 22, 1937, says :

“ We in the Punjab are, however, convinced that any scheme of educational reconstruction, if it is to be really beneficial to the people, must begin with the reorientation of the elementary system of education. This is the sheet-anchor of an educational structure of the country, in fact the seed-time of education itself, but it has not been paid the attention that it has deserved.”
.....“ The courses of study for the primary standard will be ruralised, made self-sufficient and overhauled with a definite objective which is the aim and basis of primary education. It will have an agricultural vocational bias and a bearing on the conditions of life of the students. Besides instruction in the 3 R's lessons will be given in a practical manner in civics, co-operative principles, laws of health and sanitation, improved methods of agriculture, and last but

not least the multifarious programme of rural uplift. The system of education will be based on community work, more on the actual observation of facts and things rather than on mere reading and cramming of a few fixed text-books. The ideal that we have set before ourselves is that of a rural primary school which is the centre of village life and a powerful vehicle of social emancipation, economic improvement and agricultural development."

In view of this policy the Punjab Government appointed a Committee "to suggest and define broad principles in the planning of suitable syllabi and curricula for the primary and the middle departments." The Committee made use of the Wardha Scheme, the Vidya Mandir Scheme and the Wood-Abbot Report, the three notable educational contributions of 1937, and with full consciousness of the principles of New Education constructed a syllabus which provides for handwork, constructive activities, physical welfare, civics and every-day science besides academic subjects.

Thus we have reached a stage where we find the nation trying to grasp the meaning of education. It is a hopeful sign. But the vision is still not very clear and the effort is halting. Education is that activity of a nation, the speed

of which should be that of a torrent and not that of a glacier. This is the only activity for which money must be found at any cost. This, however, is an idea which can grip the minds of those persons who are fired with selfless, constructive patriotism. India anxiously waits for the appearance of such persons.

We are now in a position to state the general principles of Indian education. The first question we have to ask is: What do we want to make of our boys and girls? We want to make them much different from our forefathers; for the world in which they live is much different. With an other-worldly, individualistic, fatalistic and communal frame of mind, we do not hope to survive in the world of to-day. It is not a world for muling and puling creatures. It is a world for strong and brave men. The challenge has come to us to become deeply interested in this world and forget the hereafter, to recognise the worth of human personality, to appreciate its potentialities, to become self-directed and co-operative. This is what future Indians must be if they hope to live honourably. To produce such persons is the aim of education.

For the realisation of this aim there is only one formula: *Force the adult and educate the child.* We must start with children and provide

them with an atmosphere in which they will grow as we want them to grow. But all adults who have to work out the new atmosphere are not amenable to new ideas. They were brought up in the old tradition. They need a very strong stimulus to work effectively. They may have to be forced and no state should be squeamish about applying force where nation-building is concerned.

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The state should mainly concentrate on primary education. A primary school should be a unit in itself ; it should not be a mere preparation for the middle school. It should be a 5-year course. It may begin with year 5 or 6 and end about 11. After five years' stay in a primary school a boy or a girl should be able to read, write and understand work-a-day Hindustani, should know as thoroughly as possible and be able to use the four rules of arithmetic and should have sufficiently understood his or her environments. Hindustani should be taught in one script only, which may be Latin. This is the only sound position to take. The rest is pusillanimity or fanaticism. In 1937 Jawahar Lal wrote a pamphlet on 'The Question of

Language. In this pamphlet he very cleverly shows the merits of Hindustani but recommends that it should be taught in two scripts, Devanagari and Urdu. This is bungling with nationalism. It means an unnecessary strain on the nation and the Congress accepted to put this strain,—the *Indian National Congress*. The whole conception of nationalism which originated with Mahatma Gandhi, the core of whose being is compromise, was wrong. Jawahar Lal, in spite of his independent head, allowed his personality to be swallowed by Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi offered him apron strings. He accepted them and in the name of discipline enjoyed the Bapu's lap immensely. To save labour and induce unity there should be only one script in India. Every group in India must be prepared to sacrifice some of the best things it loves, if a new India has to grow. That is the first requisite of national progress.

It is said that a primary school should have a staff of women only. This recommendation is based on the assumption that women are more sympathetic than men. This is not always true. A woman may be as cruel as any man and a man as gentle and kind as any woman. It does not make much difference whether teachers are men or women if they are properly trained and have

a sense of vocation. Moreover, India is not a country where the number of women exceeds that of men and if economic conditions were not distressing all women in this country, except a few, will welcome the idea of sticking to one profession only, that of the home-maker. Besides, a mixed primary school staffed by women only is not a true picture of real life. An ideal primary school where boys and girls stay together should have a staff of married couples, properly selected and trained. Out of respect for the other sex we may recommend that the head should be a woman.

Let us now make an attempt to picture to ourselves a primary school that will answer our needs.* A well-ventilated and commodious building, with latrines and urinals at a convenient distance, spittoons and waste-paper baskets at different corners and a tap or a well in the compound, is a house where the foundations of future citizenship are laid. Young boys and girls are admitted to this school by a smart zestful head mistress. Every pupil has to provide himself or herself with a uniform and a clean handkerchief. The school begins with a

* From an article by the author in *The Tribune*, Lahore, July 22, 1937.

general inspection of clothes, handkerchiefs, nails, eyes and teeth. Students are expected to keep these clean and have a daily bath. The inspection is done by the health committee composed of senior students. This is followed by the singing of the national anthem.

Then follows the intellectual programme for two hours, divided into periods of thirty minutes each, with a break for five minutes after each period. The syllabus includes reading, writing, arithmetic (all taught through modern methods) and cultural knowledge which comprises history, geography and general science. Then comes the interval for half an hour in which each pupil gets a cup of milk and anything else which is considered fit for children.

After the interval the pupils come out in groups for hand-work. You see them busy in a variety of ways. The younger sort are building with clay, or are busy in 'draw as you please.' The big ones are drawing and painting simple designs. Some are driving nails and some are weaving the fabrics of small charpais. There are little plots of flowers that some girls are tending. Other girls are busy knitting and singing folk songs. After an hour the bell stops these pleasant activities and pupils go for various games. Some of the games are scout

games and others which Indian boys and girls generally play; such as rubber balls, marble balls, '*kabaddi*,' skipping and a host of others including folk dances. This goes on for an hour, after which the school is dismissed.

The walls of the school are decorated by the students themselves with their own work, and the decorations change from week to week. The school has the following committees: (1) Health and Sanitation. (2) Recreation. (3) Discipline. The teachers are not members of these committees. The committees meet on Saturdays to review the work of the week and make plans for the week following. There is also a general assembly on that day when free discussion on school problems takes place. The rest of the day is utilised in staging dramas, fun and frolic, a common meal or a picnic. Sundays are holidays. Two months in Summer, fifteen days in Winter and fifteen days in Spring are the other holidays allowed. Communal holidays are unknown. The advent of Spring, Summer and Winter and the birthdays of the makers of Modern India are the great days that are celebrated in the school with eclat. There are no communal demarcations in the matter of drinking and eating.

There is a half-yearly medical inspection,

when a Parents' Day is also celebrated. Parents are shown the record of their boys and girls during the past six months. An outline of the pupil-record is given below :

Name.....

Age.....

Order of Birth

Father's name & occupation.....

Height.....

Weight.....

Any physical peculiarity.....

Illness or chronic ailment.....

Does he or she remain too much by himself or herself?.....

Is he or she given to any form of delinquency?.....

Is he or she over-sensitive?.....

Does he or she talk too much?.....

Intellectual progress:

Reading: Writing: Arithmetic: Cultural Knowledge.

Such a school lays the foundations of a wholesome personality. It represents the first attempt at growth in the right direction. It produces right attitudes towards life. It releases different urges to activity, creates a sense of responsibility, self-reliance, independence and the spirit of co-operation. It produces in its

pupils a desire to live and let live. It convinces them, through the little things they do, that life is an adventure and human effort counts.

It is an active school that bids fair to produce active citizens. Such a school needs actively-trained teachers, who are exceedingly patriotic, who feel that the children under their charge are the future nation and they themselves are nation-builders. Too great a sacrifice, however, should not be expected of them. They should be adequately paid. Twenty-five rupees should be the minimum start of a well-trained primary teacher.

CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

We may say a word about what we have called cultural knowledge. It means history, geography and general science not taught as separate subjects. It means the story of the different phases of human culture written with a bias to show how man has overcome his disabilities, conquered nature and attuned environment to his needs. It should also show the inter-dependence of different parts of India as also of different countries of the world. Courage and self-effort that is born of it, and inter-dependence of nations are the two ideas

that have to be burnt into the mind of every child in India. For that purpose we shall have to cut out that part of Indian History which is nothing more than a catalogue of defeats, treason and treachery. When we say this we see the custodians of Truth looking at us with daggers in their eyes. Suppression of Truth! How can this be tolerated? Yes, we want suppression of some truth. We have found the nation sick and very sick, and we play the rôle of a doctor who having diagnosed the disease cannot help making suppression of truth about the disease a part of the treatment. The nation has no courage and self-confidence. Defeatism is the kernel of its mind. We want to recondition the nation. Not a sound that suggests defeat of our people shall fall upon the ears of our children. The study of stereotyped History should be stopped in our schools. It may form part of university teaching. During the first two years only Reading, Writing and Arithmetic should be taken. In the third year, besides three R's, immediate surroundings, for instance, the working of a Post Office, should be explained and in the fourth and fifth year three stories should be taught: the stories of the satisfaction of hunger, clothing and shelter. These stories should be woven on a

frame-work of human effort and human interdependence, with the warp and woof of Science, History and Geography. If these stories are carefully written dead maps on school walls will begin to live and mountains and rivers will talk to children. A new sense of humanity will grow in them when they know how many people and how many regions of the globe have co-operated in the making of the shirt they wear, the loaf they eat and the house they live in. The idea of human progress will dawn upon them when they see the marvellous improvement that has been made on the ways in which their forefathers lived.

10-MILE SCHEME

We have already said that the state should entirely take over Primary Education. The whole of the populated area of this country should be divided into 10-mile units, each unit having three to five primary schools, manned by properly selected teachers. Each unit should be under the charge of a married couple, of whom the husband should be at least a graduate and the wife a matriculate. The wife should not be a 'purdah' lady. Both should be imbued with the spirit of national service. Each should

have taken a year's training at a Training College and a Normal School, respectively. This training must include a study of general principles of Sociology, First-aid, Scouting, Hygiene and Civics. The couple should be able to organise the intellectual and social life of the unit in their charge as well as look over the primary schools in that area. These national guards should not belong to any church. They should be provided with a free house specially built for them at a central place in a unit. The salary of the couple should be at least Rs. 75 in villages and Rs. 85 in big towns, going up to Rs. 120 and Rs. 150, respectively. In this way education and not mere literacy of the whole country will be efficiently organised and before long a new nation pulsating with life and purpose will grow.

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

After the primary school comes the secondary school, a four-year course of two types,—academic and technical. The technical school will impart knowledge and give training in industries which will be started in our country. The courses of study in this school will be

mainly determined by the nature of industries in operation outside the school.

The teaching in the secondary school of both types will be in Hindustani and English will be a compulsory subject. There will be no provision for the study of classical languages, which, experience has shown, is a mere waste of time. In place of classical languages each student will be required to take up the study of some art such as music, painting and plastic work.

Cultural knowledge will be extended to scientific discoveries and inventions, specially those that have become a part of our life. Stories about them will be presented in the light of the principles enunciated above.

The secondary school will be followed by the higher secondary school which will be a specialised course for two or three years. On the academic side students will be prepared for the university. Girl students who do not want to go to the university—and most of them should not—will be instructed in the art and science of motherhood and home-making. Only those girls should go to the university who have an earnest desire to enter intellectual professions and stay there.

The reader, perhaps, wants us to say a word

about co-education after the elementary school. In theory we have no objection to co-education at any stage but in actual practice co-education in the secondary school and later will be fraught with many dangers so long as the whole of our society is not reorganised upon a mixed pattern.

We have come to the end of the tale of India's misery. We have made an attempt to discover the causes of that misery and thought out ways to remove them. If we only become conscious of our inherent powers and make use of them there is no reason why we should not become happy and prosperous.

We are reminded of a story told by our forefathers. A son was born to a certain King. The soothsayers said that the child was ominous and that the King should have no contact with him. The child was cast away into a jungle. Fortunately a cowherd passing that way picked him up and brought him up as a cowherd. The child grew up to be a fine boy, tall and handsome with eyes beaming with lustre. But he was a cowherd.

One day an old minister of the King who had the knowledge of the whole episode came that way. He looked at the young man and knew who he was. He went up to him and

asked, 'Who are you?' The young man replied, 'I am a cowherd, the son of so and so.' 'No, you are a prince,' said the old man. 'No, sir, I am a cowherd.' Then the minister gave him the whole story. Immediately the young man's face changed. He stood straight and a peculiar light shone on his forehead.

Reader, you are a prince. Why do you behave like the pariahs of the earth? With the courage of a lion rise and reshape the destiny of your country.

Greater than Heaven is The Earth, greater
than The Earth is The Motherland.

IN SHORT

The age of mahatmas and lambs is over.

We have now to become men and lions.

For that purpose forget heaven, hell and hereafter.

Love The Earth and that sacred portion of it, called Hindustan.

Measure the success of your life not by asking yourself :

How much nearer am I Nirvana, but how much nearer am I Man ?

Become physically strong. A weak nation is a burden for the whole world.

Uphold the ideal of Love, Truth and Justice.

Give no quarter to evil. Wherever and in whatever form it appears resist it, fight it and destroy it.

Boycott all communal organisations.

Discipline yourself. Discipline is the core of personal and national strength.

God is everywhere. Nearer, says the Quran, than the vein of your neck. Retire to a solitary place and pray to Him for courage and strength to fight evil.

Do not belong to any church, if you care to retain your independence.

Men and women are equal. Let them feel as such and respect each other.

Conservation of sex-energy is a national duty.

A loose life is a national sin.

A monogamous and permanent marriage is a sign of the highest culture.

Who are the enemies of India?

The followers of the ideal of personal salvation.

The followers of the philosophy of non-violence.

Believers in caste.

Communalists.

